













# WESLEYAN LOCAL PREACHERS:

Biographical Illustrations

OF THEIR

POSITION IN THE CONNEXION,  
UTILITY IN THE CHURCH,  
AND INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

*"TYNESIDE CELEBRITIES."*

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To  
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*Elswick House,*  
*Newcastle-upon-Tyne,*  
*A WESLEYAN LOCAL PREACHER,*

**This Work**  
*is affectionately dedicated*  
*by*  
**A BROTHER IN THE GOSPEL.**







## P R E F A C E.



THE study of Religious Biography serves alike to counsel and encourage the young believer, and to comfort and strengthen the aged pilgrim Zionward. The lives of good men who have passed away from the scene of their disappointments and aspirations, sorrows and joys, trials and triumphs, naturally present features of profitable interest to those who are bravely striving to do battle against supernatural and deadly foes, and to be consistent followers of them who through faith and patience have inherited the promises. The Bible furnishes numerous instances in illustration. Animated by a power divine, Old Testament worthies stood forth as the exponents of God's will to man, and were witnesses of the truths they declared, not only by their words, but in their lives. The record of their deeds will always stimulate the faith, warm the affections, and quicken the energies of Christ's people. In New Testament times the same characteristics were observable in the apostles and evangelists, and were powerful evidences of the authenticity of the gospel they delivered, as a message of grace, mercy, and peace from a Covenant-God in Christ. The holy zeal and godly declarations of the great leaders of the early Christian Church have, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, been fruitful in raising up a noble succession



of like-minded though humbler brethren, who have, in subsequent ages, hesitated not to declare a full, free, and present salvation to man through faith in a crucified Redeemer. The history of God's Universal Church is, indeed, a compendium of the biographies of His servants, who have been prominently identified in the extension of His kingdom upon the earth, and who have been called upon, in the gracious dispensations of an All-wise Providence, to do special work for His honour and glory, and the eternal well-being of humanity. To the Christian, therefore, the ensamples exhibited in the actions and experiences of eminent labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, are of more than passing moment, while they are fraught with valuable instruction in things which pertain to the believer's everlasting felicity.

Closely connected as they have been with the rise and progress of Wesleyanism, the labours of distinguished Local Preachers are of historical interest and importance to the Connexion. Whether we consider the excellence of their Christian character, the diversity of their talents, or the disinterestedness of their efforts on behalf of mankind, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that many of our Lay-Ministers have been more than ordinary men; while the fact that their services have been signally owned of God in the conversion of souls, fully justifies the apparently anomalous position which the order fills in one particular branch of the Church Militant. But however significant Lay Agency may appear to the observant student of Methodist History, it must be admitted that very inadequate ideas are sometimes entertained at the present day regarding it. While it has been exposed not unfrequently to the contemptuous ridicule of strangers, the Lay-Ministry of our Church has suffered at times from the callous indifference of friends. As a result of this, many useful gospel workmen have been subjected to needless discouragement when



prosecuting their onerous, self-denying labours. To remove unfounded prejudices regarding Lay-Preachers and their work, is one of the objects for which the following pages have been written.

Hitherto no attempt has been made to bring together, in a convenient form, representative biographies of the Wesleyan Lay-Ministry. An endeavour has now been made for this end, but without seeking to trench upon the province of the exhaustive historian, or to supersede the meritorious productions of such excellent Biographers as the Rev. James Everett, Jacob H. Drew, and others who have treated the careers of Methodist Local Preachers with loving, reverential regard. On the contrary, grateful acknowledgments are tendered to all who have previously endeavoured to rescue the names of eminent Lay-Preachers from forgetfulness, and to place their services, to the Connexion and to vital religion, in the situation these are undoubtedly entitled to occupy in the Annals of the Christian Church. My aim has been to give a circumscribed but faithful picture of the Wesleyan Local Ministry, to group together some of the more notable passages in the history of Lay Agency, to trace briefly the courses of a few distinguished lives, to record examples of many good results which have accrued from the active employment of laymen in the work of the gospel, and to supply incentives to increased exertion on the part of all who are engaged in an offensive warfare against the powers of darkness.

It is fervently hoped that the following sketches will be found interesting and profitable to the Christian worker in any sphere of labour ; that the models of real excellence herein exhibited, from various conditions of social existence, will awaken holy emulation in the cause of God ; that those who have already professed their faith in Christ will be incited thereby to consecrate themselves more and more to



His service ; that the careless or lukewarm may be quickened into spiritual concern and zealous activity ; and that the young, especially, may be arrested while perusing these pages, and led to devote the natural energies of early life to the promotion of the interests, and the extension of the boundaries, of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world.

WILLIAM D. LAWSON.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE,  
*12th December 1874.*



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# WESLEYAN LOCAL PREACHERS,



## *A GLANCE AT METHODISM.*

THE religion of Methodism is a scriptural religion. Its doctrines, discipline, and usages form the beautiful features of a truly Christian Church. No one, we think, can rise from a careful consideration of its economy, and fail to see in it the marks of Divinity. While, therefore, it is not part of our present design to analyse fully the Methodist constitution, we cannot altogether overlook some of the more prominent points in its character. With every one within the pale of its communion there must be a work of grace ; from all are required some fruits of the Spirit ; while, for the development and outward manifestation of the Christian life, suitable ordinances and varied spheres of labour are presented. As the history of the Connexion shows, Methodism has not only been an aggressive power, but one by which forces have been concentrated, systematised, and formed into one unique institution for the dissemination of the truth. Regarded as a code of regulations for the walk and conversation of a pious person, it claims our earnest attention. Applying as it does to everyday life the statutes of God, and making these a well-defined line of duty, be our surroundings what they may, it is to us an unfailing counsellor and guide. Accordingly, when the dispositions, principles, and sentiments of the believer are



regulated by such a standard, a definite form has been given to his character, and his whole life becomes an incontestable evidence to the truthfulness of revelation. As the molten metal when poured into the mould assumes the form prepared for it by the artisan, so also should the feelings, the purposes, the efforts of Christ's disciples take the shape and figure of the pattern given by Methodism to her children, for that has been taken from the "Written Word—the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice." We cannot better describe the scope and tendency of such teaching than in the words of John Wesley, viz. :—"Methodism, so called, is the old religion, the religion of the Bible, the religion of the Primitive Church, the religion of the Church of England." And again, "A Methodist is a man who lives according to the *Method* laid down in the Bible."

The laws of the Connexion were conceived in wisdom, and have been administered with clemency. We do not, however, recognise in them merely a code of rules by which individual members are to regulate their lives, but a general polity also, by which the whole Church is to be governed. Necessity, as we shall see, called for labour—labour produced results—those results required to be strengthened and confirmed, and in their turn utilised and adapted for the purpose of still further extending the field of labour. To the varying circumstances of his time, and the increasingly grave demands upon his personal attention and care, John Wesley brought such an amount of analytical ability, consummate tact, indomitable energy, and inflexible determination, as could not have failed, even under more adverse circumstances, to make him a master of the situation. Many things conspired either to alter the favourable aspect of the work or to destroy it altogether. But these were not only met and rendered ineffectual with a truly wonderful skill, but were frequently made to be contributory to the



further extension of the kingdom of God. In this manner were originated, and not by any act of premeditation, the most interesting customs and the effective working-plan of Methodism. And thus, having seen order brought out of confusion, and a Church, governed by love and equity, raised from the masses of the people, we glorify God for the founder thereof. Yea, we do so the more readily while witnessing the completeness of the organisation of labour in the Wesleyan Community.

Consistently with the various strata of society, social, intellectual, and religious, numerous agencies exist, so that each member of the Church may be actively employed. Divided into *Classes* of about twelve persons, over each of which a *Leader* is appointed, the members meet weekly for prayer, fellowship, and instruction in righteousness. In connection with these meetings, *Visitors* attend upon the sick; *Stewards* receive subscriptions towards the maintenance of the ministry, &c.; while upon other labourers, and that not unfrequently, necessity calls. *Local Preachers* minister in the villages of the Circuit to which they belong, according to the appointment of the Superintendent. *Prayer-leaders* and *Sunday-school Teachers* devote their services to important spheres of usefulness, and form an effective auxiliary power for good. In one word, the scheme of operations, if fully and faithfully carried out, would embrace every hitherto neglected spot, and extend the blessings of redemption to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The foregoing remarks are not only pertinent, but admonishing, when read in the light of history. In a comparatively short period Methodism was planted in almost every industrial centre of this country, and in nearly every habitable quarter of the globe. Into the darkness of his times John Wesley carried the lamp of truth, and ere his days on earth were ended, a thousand lighted torches had



dispersed the gloom. Into other countries the flame was borne, and beacons were raised in many lands to guide the pilgrims to eternity. Thus in every place, whither the pioneers of Methodism went, was spread the light of the glorious Gospel. Europe rejoiced; America was glad; the islands of the sea clapped their hands; Asia, Africa, and Australasia shouted for joy at the sight. In less than fifty years there were 74,254 persons in the Methodist Societies, while during that period many thousands more had passed from earth to heaven. But that number was only as the nucleus of what the body should become. In fifty years more there were in Church-membership 406,178 individuals, and ever, from the time of its commencement until now, has its numbers increased. Besides, the other Churches of Methodism cannot but be regarded as offshoots from the parent stem, and these are represented by considerable numerical strength. Well may we exclaim, "What hath God wrought?" Little did Wesley think, when he sailed with the pious Moravians, that the religion which calmed and gladdened their spirits—while others of the crew were stricken with terror, and all expected momentarily a watery grave—was destined to be the heritage of thousands of that and successive generations. Little did he imagine that out of the simple occurrences of the passing moment he should lay the foundation of a Church, the schemes of which would cover, like a mighty network, the face of the globe, and endure throughout all time. Never did he suppose, during the performance of his self-enjoined duties, or while he seriously conversed with Harvey, Clayton, Ingham, and others, that he was sowing the seeds of the grand reformation of the eighteenth century. Such, however, was the purpose of the Almighty. Men persecuted; Satan raged; hotly waged the battle between truth and error. In the end truth was victorious.



By the road of persecution were Methodists conducted to a position of security and stability. Their name is not now a term of reproach, but a title which claims respect.

The system has in it all the elements of perpetuity. Compact yet comprehensive, and containing within itself a well-spring of effort, it has continued to exist while others have passed away. In the nature of things, a succession of holy men can never be wanting to carry on the work. When the Wesleys, Whitfield, and others had passed away, Pawson, Bramwell, the Taylors, and many more were found to stand by the ark of the Lord. When the latter were laid aside through infirmity or death, Clarke and Watson, Bunting and Newton, Lessey and Beaumont, became leaders of the people. And again, in more recent times, hath God raised up men by His wondrous grace, who are ornaments of society, pillars in the Church, and benefactors of the human race. A review of the lives or achievements of one class of men to the exclusion of others, however, is not always attended by feelings of unmixed satisfaction. The successful leadership of an heroic general is commonly recorded in unqualified terms of commendation, while the actions of his subordinate officers, who may have, by prowess and skilful manœuvring, contributed to the victory, are either suppressed or overlooked in the narrative of the engagement. When mention is made of Waterloo, we are reminded of that name which will ever garnish the roll of England's warriors—Wellington. A reference to mechanical science brings to our thoughts the name of Stephenson, the father of railways, or of others who became famous in this branch of study and invention. Similarly will the names of Newton, Hewson, Howard, and Miller, be brought to memory when conversation turns upon the subject of research to which they individually devoted their lives. The careers of such men form interesting chapters in the history



of their country, and without them no historical record of the circumstances and events which have made Britain famous would be complete. In like manner the name of Wesley and of Nelson must always be associated with the labours and sufferings connected with missionary enterprise. The names of Brackenbury and Geake, of Winscom and Jones, of Baxter and Embury, of Crook and others, must always appear in the story of the wonderful growth of the Wesleyan Church. The lives of such men as Drew, Dawson, and Richardson must ever impress the reader with a sense of their great mental capacity, eloquent ability, or vigorous moral power. By the results of the efforts of such men was Dr Chalmers led to look upon Methodism as being the embodiment of an earnest, living Christianity. Called Helpers, Co-workers, Lay-Preachers, or by any other name, their several endowments were exceptionally great; their blameless lives won the encomiums of their enemies; their faith wrought miracles; while the savour of their influence effected a blessed transformation in the moral condition of our land. Without educational advantages or elocutionary training, they spoke with the wisdom and skill which God giveth. An intensity of feeling was poured into the words they uttered. Sinners were awed, stricken, converted in their presence. Earth acknowledged them as ambassadors of the King of kings. They moved amongst men as living tongues of fire. Their voice resembled the voice of a seraph. They carried about with them the contagion of holiness. It has been well said regarding them, "The good which has been done by the Local Preachers of Methodism shall only be fully known at that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed." \*

As true moral reflectors, they displayed in their consistent lives the effects of the operation of the Spirit of

\* "Essay on the Pastoral Office," by Rev. A. Barrett.



God. In the world they accomplished much ; in the Church they wrought wonders. The purity of their conduct, and the holy influence they exercised, constitute them models of true excellence. Their example is worthy of imitation. We desire no brighter examples of " whatsoever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report." To the scholars of ancient Greece and of Rome were given the works of the great masters of their respective countries, and these served to excite their ambition and stimulate their energies. Hence it is that in the most commonplace dialogues in the writings of old-world authors, continual reference is made to the paintings of Parrhasius, Protogenes, or Apelles, and to the sculptures of Phidias, Myron, or Lysippus. The mantle of Elijah was to Elisha the symbol of prophetic ken. So may the lives of the Local Preachers of a past generation incite their successors in the work of the Lay-Ministry.

In the history of the past triumphs of Methodism, we find encouragement to hope for a glorious future. What has already been done may again be accomplished. Never, while its agencies are fully employed and its discipline lovingly enforced, can the Church cease to exercise a mighty influence in the world. While the sympathies of the heart, the powers of intellect and of wealth, are being wisely directed, let us preserve the old landmarks, and fan the holy flame in our own breasts which formerly burned in the hearts of our fathers. Let us retain and foster those active, living principles of truth, which have made us, as a Church, the glory of the earth. Thus shall Methodism be the means of hastening the coming of that millennium in which the light of the Sun of Righteousness will irradiate all lands, in which love shall sway a universal sceptre, and in which shall be heard the glorious anthem of the skies, " Hallelujah ! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth !"



*LAY PREACHING.*

“TAKE care what you do with respect to that young man ; for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are.” Such were the words that influenced the choice of the first Local Preacher, and that suggested the appointment of lay agency. The fulness of their meaning cannot be estimated by any finite being. Mrs Susannah Wesley was the speaker ; the person she addressed was her son, John Wesley ; Thomas Maxfield, “ Wesley’s first lay helper,” was the subject. The story and its sequel are not soon told. A spirit of inquiry had been generated in London, Bristol, Staffordshire, Lancashire, and other centres of population, while in all parts of the kingdom men were found to be seeking after the truth. Of that time it might have been said with evident fitness, “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.” In most of the Societies then planted, the number of members had been greatly increased, entailing a greater weight of responsibility upon those to whom had been entrusted the oversight of the Church. Some pious clergymen, it is true, had rendered good service ; but what were the number of these when compared with the masses of the people ? Besides, the alienation of those who had been early associated with him in evangelistic work, convinced John Wesley that the source from which the labourers had been hitherto drawn must be widened and enlarged. The meditative Hervey, the eloquent Whitfield, and others had separated themselves from him on account of his labours and doctrines. Mr











Gambold, Mr Stonehouse, and others had severed the ties which had bound themselves to him in Christian fellowship. At such a time—pregnant as it was with great events—do we find the attention of the founder of Methodism arrested by the opening words of this chapter.

The circumstances connected with this interesting incident in the life of John Wesley are thus recorded in his biography : \*—“ When he was about to leave London for a season, he appointed one whom he judged to be strong in faith, and of an exemplary conversation, to meet the Society at the usual times, to pray with them, and to give them such advice as might be needful. This was Mr Maxfield, one of the first-fruits of his ministry at Bristol. This young man, being fervent in spirit and *mighty in the Scriptures*, greatly profited the people. They crowded to hear him, and by the increase of their number, as well as by their earnest and deep attention, they insensibly led him to go further than he had at first designed. He began to *preach*, and the Lord so blessed the word, that many were not only deeply awakened and brought to repentance, but were also made happy in a consciousness of pardon. The Scripture marks of true conversion—inward peace and power to walk in all holiness—evinced the work to be of God. Some, however, were offended at this *irregularity*, as it was termed. A complaint was made in form to Mr Wesley, and he hastened to London in order to put a stop to it. His mother then lived in his house, adjoining to the Foundry. When he arrived, she perceived that his countenance was expressive of dissatisfaction, and inquired the cause. ‘ Thomas Maxfield,’ said he abruptly, ‘ has turned preacher, I find.’ She looked attentively at him, and replied, ‘ John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily anything of this kind. But take

\* Moore’s “ Life of Wesley,” vol. i. p. 506.



care what you do with respect to that young man ; for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him also yourself.'” The counsel was heeded and the advice followed. The prejudices evolved from Wesley’s scholastic training were for ever banished ; and, filled with feelings of reverence and humility, he exclaimed, “ It is the Lord : let Him do what seemeth Him good.”

It was a memorable moment. Few events in history can compare with the importance of that one which it fulfilled. In the career of Wesley no crisis was so eventful. One of two opposite courses he must pursue ; and in his decision was vested, so to speak, the everlasting salvation of myriads of souls. The fields were white unto the harvest, but could not be reaped for lack of the labourers. It is true that Thomas Maxfield had thrust himself through an opening in the fence, and had gathered some sheaves ; but that was an irregular course, which many timid Christians protested against, and sought to prevent. The question resolved itself, therefore, into this :—In the absence of an ordained ministry, or while the lawfully-appointed pastorate is actuated by a spirit of careless indifference to the matter, are the spiritual wants of the people to be wholly neglected ? Nay ! was the answer which an irresistible conviction compelled the father of Methodism to make. Accordingly, Thomas Maxfield was authorised to *preach* to the congregation.

From the year 1740 we trace the line of that noble succession of men who have shed such a lustre upon the annals of our Church. Here we see the beginning of an era new and glorious, the foreshadowing of results unexpected and unparalleled, the dawn of a dispensation that shall only cease with the flight of time. Lay preaching in Methodism was not a preconceived scheme of its founder, but a provi-



dential arrangement. The recognition of a Lay-Ministry was not in accordance with established views regarding Church polity. Only after a full and searching examination of the evidence in its favour did Wesley reconcile himself to its employment. The case of Thomas Maxfield was not an isolated one. Circumstances of a similar character were known to Wesley as having occurred beyond the sphere of his jurisdiction. Besides, there were facts in his own career as an evangelist which pointed to the acceptance of lay-ministerial assistance as a thing to be desired rather than avoided. Other laymen had expounded the Word of God before the licensing of the first "Lay-Preacher." In 1738, Joseph Humphries assisted Wesley in a similar capacity; and in the same year David Taylor exhorted the people of Yorkshire, as he had done for a considerable time previously. The names of Harris, Shaw, and Cennick may also be mentioned in this connection, although it should be remembered that the latter, with Humphries and Maxfield, were alone recognised by the great leader. Other laymen, however, in various places and prior to the time of which we speak, were constrained to preach the gospel of the grace of God, without waiting for the approval and co-operation of any clergyman. Circumstances of the gravest character made it imperatively necessary for them to work. The burden of the Lord was upon them. "Woe is unto me!" many an one said, impressed with a deep sense of personal responsibility—"Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." Howell Harris, who became one of the most effective preachers of his day, says—"The fire of God did so burn in my soul, that I could not rest day nor night without doing something for my God and Saviour." John Nelson, a man of surpassing judgment and wit, piety and usefulness, on receiving the love of God, must needs leave his residence in London for the West Riding of York-



shire, in order that he might tell to his family, his friends, and his old neighbours, what the Lord had done for his soul. Impelled by strong instinctive love for their fellow-men, and directed by the all-powerful influences of the Spirit of God, these men took their stand boldly by the Cross, until the Church was constrained to acknowledge them as legitimate, though subordinate, champions of Christianity. To open out a permanent sphere of action for them was an act of wisdom. To reject their proffered services would have been the height of folly. While, therefore, the adoption of the principle of lay agency as an auxiliary in the work of the ministry, and the harmony of the arrangements devised for carrying out the same, reflect the prospective acumen of a master-mind, they display the all-wise and beneficent workings of that Providence which guides alike the destinies of individuals and communities.

The presages of this newly-devised plan for multiplying the number of labourers in the gospel vineyard were of solemn import to the Connexion. A corps was thereby raised from which might be selected men fitted to fulfil the highest duties connected with the most extensive spheres of usefulness ; a discipline inaugurated by which Itinerant Ministers were to be prepared and qualified for the exercise of their holy vocation. By occasionally ministering the Word of Life, the early Local Preachers were enabled to give evidence to the existence of spiritual impulses, mental capabilities, and powers of utterance in the laity, which might otherwise have remained dormant, and which have always commended the order to the affectionate regard of the Church. At the time of which we write, the congregations were accustomed to hear the Word preached by men possessed of great mental powers as well as of deep-toned piety, and, without a rare combination of gifts and graces in the preacher, the people were not satisfied. But for the exist-



ence, indeed, of such an agency, many brilliant stars in our spiritual horizon might have remained unseen. But for the opportunities thus afforded for the exercise of their talents, the names of Benson, of Biblical lore ; Bradburn, of golden speech ; Clarke, of classic fame ; Murlin, "the weeping prophet ;" Bramwell, of prophetic ken ; Watson, of theological acumen ; Bunting, of administrative ability, and others of illustrious worth, would have been unknown, probably, in the religious world. As in apostolic times rare gifts were bestowed in rich profusion upon the ambassadors of Christ—such as the gift of tongues, of prophecy, and of power to work miracles—while suitable channels were opened up by which the richest blessings might be conveyed to the hearts of God's people ; so, also, in the early days of Methodism men were actively employed who had not merely the knowledge of the schools, but such varied talents and strength of godly sympathy as made them powerful for good. At first, the Lay-Ministry was established to meet what had become an emergency in the history of the Church ; with the lapse of time, however, it assumed the honourable position of a necessary agency in the efficient working of the Plans of the Connexion.

The character of the Local Ministry of Methodism has not a parallel in any other branch of Nonconformity. There has been no provision made for lay preaching in Presbyterian polity. There is but a semblance of it in Congregationalism ; while in the Baptist and other Dissenting communities we find only a stated ministry. In its more marked features, therefore, our Lay-Ministry stands alone among the Churches of Christendom. Yet it is an organisation stamped with the seal of apostolic usage and of the early Christian Church. It follows a custom which has been re-established, after having fallen for centuries into disuse. At first sight, it appears strange to the student of ecclesiastical history



that such a power for good should have been allowed to remain in abeyance, or that difficulties should have at any time arisen to retard its resuscitation. John Wesley was actuated by the highest motives, however, when he approached the question of its revival with caution, and exercised the most watchful care in order to admit only qualified men to the office. The scriptural tests by which a candidate is judged are as follows :—“ 1. Has he grace? Has he given satisfactory proof that he has been converted to God, that he is living a holy life, and that he is fully devoted to the will of God? 2. Has he gifts as well as grace? Has he, in some tolerable degree, a sound understanding and sound judgment in the things of God, a clear perception of salvation by faith, and has God given him such a degree of utterance that he can express himself justly, readily, clearly? Has he fruit? Are any convinced of sin and converted to God under his ministrations? As long as these three marks occur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved thereto by the Holy Ghost.”\* Nor did this strict form of discipline fail to become a source of blessing to the Society. After seeing, tasting, handling, the things of God for themselves, the early preachers could with warmth of feeling say—

“ What we have felt and seen  
With confidence we tell,  
And publish to the sons of men  
The signs infallible.”

Changed and sanctified in their own hearts and lives, their most ardent desires were centred in the salvation of their fellow-men. The spirit of earnest devotion to their Master's service, which was the charm and mainspring of their existence, was observable in the expression of their counten-

\* “ Minutes of Conference.”



ances, the propriety of their language, the consistency of their behaviour, and the burning zeal with which they commended the love of God to perishing sinners. Thomas Tucker, one of the number, who began to labour nearly a hundred years ago, has been described by one who knew him intimately as a man that “lived much under the divine influence, and a peculiar unction attended his word. His doctrine distilled as the dew: and many seals he had to his ministry, who went before him to glory, and are now to him a crown of rejoicing.” After preaching at Farmborough, on the 29th August 1817, from the words, “*To you who believe, He is precious,*” it was said, regarding his service in the pulpit upon that occasion, by some of his hearers, “It seemed as though he went to heaven for every word.” A simple yet reliable testimony to the efficacy and power which accompanied the ministration of the Word of life by an earnest and able, though unordained, preacher of the gospel. Many such instances might be cited in proof of the wisdom which directed the appointment of a Lay-Ministry in our Church. We prefer rather to direct the attention of our readers to cases of a like nature which are recorded in connection with the labours of those whose lives form the body of our present work, and to the bright examples we have endeavoured to sketch therein—examples of true godliness making resplendent the humble life, of the pulpit efforts of unlearned men becoming a mighty influence for good, not only to unawakened sinners, but also to believers in the Lord. The great antitheses—sin and holiness, death and life—were the topics such men loved to dwell upon in their addresses to the people. On the broad principles of Christianity they offered Christ to their hearers. By the sanctity of their lives, the truthfulness and virtue of the Word they preached were made abundantly manifest. Christ and Him crucified was received with



anxious enthusiasm by awakened thousands, and the fruits of their labours formed also the results of the glorious revivals of their times. They were prepared and fitted for their work by high attainments in the graces of the Christian life, as well as by a close communion and constant fellowship with God.

The ordeal through which Lay-Preachers are called to pass has often secured to the Church men of talent, in the highest sense of the term. The roll of the Local Ministry contains the names of men who possessed rare natural endowments, of others gifted with singular originality of thought, and of those in whom brilliancy of conception and force of utterance were innate. To such as are familiar with logic, mathematics, or other sciences, a tribute of commendation must be given for the industry, patience, and thought they may have spent in the acquisition. They will always yield, however, the palm of excellence to natural genius. The most thorough educational training cannot create in the human mind that which nature hath not already implanted. That a gradual expansion and development of the mental capacities ought never to be confounded with scholastic attainments was the axiom which guided John Wesley in the selection of men for the work of the ministry. Consequently, we find in the ranks of the early Methodist preachers a galaxy of worthies that would have shed a lustre upon the history of any church, or age, or nation. As specimens, we will content ourselves by mentioning one or two individuals. The circle from which they are drawn is crowded with others of similar character.

"I knew a man," writes John Wesley, "who was so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, that if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or Greek word in the New Testament, he would tell, after a little



pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place. His name was Thomas Walsh. Such a master of Biblical knowledge I never saw before, and never expect to see again." \* John Downs, another of the early Itinerant Preachers, was not only conspicuous for his piety and general ability, but remarkable for his aptitude for mathematics and his artistic and mechanical talents. He was held in high estimation by Wesley, who thus writes regarding him :—" I suppose he was as great a genius as Sir Isaac Newton : such strength of genius has scarce been known in Europe before. I will mention but two or three instances of it. When he was at school learning algebra, he came one day to his master, and said, ' Sir, I can prove this proposition a better way than it is proved in the book.' His master thought it could not be, but, upon trial, acknowledged it to be so. Some time after, his father sent him to Newcastle with a clock which was to be mended. He observed the clockmaker's tools, and the manner how he took it to pieces and put it together again, and, when he came home, first made himself tools, and then made a clock, which went as true as any in the town. Another proof of it was this :—Thirty years ago, while I was shaving, he was whittling the top of a stick. I asked, ' What are you doing ?' He answered, ' I am taking your face, which I intend to engrave on a copper-plate.' Accordingly, without any instruction, he first made himself tools, and then engraved the plate. The second picture which he engraved was that which was prefixed to the ' Notes upon the New Testament.' Such another instance, I suppose, not all England, or perhaps Europe, can produce." † These powers, under Divine grace, won for the possessors the esteem and affection of the people.

\* Wesley's Sermons.

† Wesley's Works, vol. iv. p. 33.



Self-interest was lost sight of in the truly momentous importance of the duty that devolved upon the early Methodist Preachers to declare frequently a "full, free, and present salvation." The humility of their demeanour denoted the simplicity of their hearts. Self-adulation had no place in their conversation. Their unquenchable zeal for God often caused them to become penniless. With them there was no study of rounded periods and dramatic effect, no undue consideration for church formularies or personal status. Their whole being was devoted to the purposes of the Divine will, their thoughts were absorbed in care for the condition, prospects, and ultimate state of their hearers. Without great physical, mental, and moral strength, they could not have coped with the exigences of the time. Long were the distances they travelled, frequent were the appointments supplied, severe the hardships endured. It has been computed that one Local Preacher travelled no fewer than *fifty thousand miles* for the purpose of publishing the Gospel, and preached *five thousand sermons*. Many were dismissed from employment, persecuted in their homes, and otherwise opposed in the work to which they had set their hand. But they had counted the cost, and became inured to their lot. Rocked by the billows of the deep, yet uninfluenced by its flux and reflux, they outrode the storms amid which was raised the beacon of Methodism. Having put their hands to the plough, they turned not aside, but made deep the furrows, scattered broadcast the seeds of the Kingdom, tended sedulously the upspringing grain, and were made jubilant with the sight of a rich harvest gathered into the garner of the Lord.

God honoured His servants by giving them abundant success. Societies in rapid succession were planted. Competent men were found to supply the ever-increasing number of pulpits. A spiritual awakening, earnest, wide-spread,



and permanent, was felt throughout the country. Signs and wonders were wrought in the name and by the power of the Lord. And not only did the Gospel give forth a certain sound in England, the idols of the East fell before it, the priestcraft and popery of the North were shaken by it, the heathen of the West received it, and from shore to shore was borne the standard of the cross. These early Lay-Preachers honoured God by their faith. Animated by a Divine power, their faith wrought by their works. Perhaps it is not too presumptuous in us to say, that, in many respects, they were worthy successors of the prophets and apostles of old. Certainly they exhibited the impress of an apostolic succession, to which many who had received ordination at the hands of bishops could not lay claim. As the waters of the Red Sea divided themselves, and stood erect before the advancing Israelites at the bidding of Moses, so did ignorance on the one hand and prejudice on the other flow backward at the touch of the pioneers of Methodist doctrine. Infidelity hid for a time its baneful countenance, and persecution cast away its weapons before their onward progress. As the lame man at the Beautiful Gate arose at the command of Peter, so were miracles of grace wrought through the instrumentality of these devoted servants of the Lord. The fruits of their labours it is impossible for finite mind to estimate. The richness of the harvest is only known now to the Owner of the vineyard. If, however, *head-work, heart-work, and life-work* form tests by which to judge of the capabilities of men for the work of preaching the Gospel, then the qualifications of the early Methodist Preachers were undoubtedly genuine.

Lay Agency is peculiarly adapted to the multifarious conditions of our race. Giving, as it does, active employment to men of every status in society, it is destined to confer lasting benefit upon mankind. A peculiar advantage which



it possesses is to be found in the fact that those who engage in the work are thoroughly acquainted with the manners, the habits, and the forms of speech of the people among whom they are appointed to labour. In their own tongue and way of expression—neither of which may be easily acquired by a stranger—are the tidings of salvation declared to the people by their own friends and neighbours. Free intercourse in the ordinary affairs of life prepares, as it were, the way for free communication of the things which pertain to our eternal rest. Thus the pathway to heaven is widened, and the number of travellers thitherward from time to time increased. Another important purpose is served by the employment of Lay-Preachers. We sometimes hear such an expression as, “It is one thing to *preach*, it is quite another thing to *practise*,” used by those who seek to excuse themselves from following a strict path of duty and obedience. “It is all very well for parsons and ministers to cry out against ‘tricks in trade,’ ‘commercial dishonesty,’ and ‘white lies;’ were they in our place, they would not be a whit better than we are.” By such sophistry men of the world commonly endeavour to stifle the voice of reproofing conscience. But our Local Preachers are required not only to *preach* but to *practise* the Gospel amid all the temptations to which men are exposed in an age remarkable for competition and immorality in trade, and they are expected to be as “lights shining in a dark place,” so that those who listen to their doctrine may discover a reflection of their teaching in their lives. To be witnesses to the truth that it is possible to carry the Gospel about with us into every sphere of everyday existence to which we may be called, should be, therefore, the great aim of those who aspire to the honour of being successful Preachers. That such a desire animated the hearts of the Local Preachers of the past generation is proved in the simple narratives contained



in the following pages. In adopting the law of the Gospel as the standard by which to shape their own daily conduct, they declared its practicability to their neighbours and all who came into business relations with them. Thus did they become ensamples to the people, leaders in the Church, and the humble, yet watchful, guardians of interests the most momentous.

Although vested with authority to preach the Gospel, a Local Preacher's labours are not confined to his pulpit ministrations. In his own family circle, in the wider sphere of his acquaintances and friends, and in his necessary transactions with the outer world, he should embrace judiciously every opportunity which presents itself for declaring "the truth as it is in Jesus." When, therefore, we look at the circumstances of the persons employed, and the condition of the people to whom they minister, we see the adaptation of means to an end. It has been well said, that "it is a law of our nature to argue from the effect to the cause—from the action to the agent—from the ends proposed and the means of pursuing them to the character and disposition of the being in whom we observe them. By these processes we learn the invisible mind and character of man, and by the same processes we ascend to the mind of God, whose works, effects, operations, and ends, are as expressive and significant as the best and most decisive actions of men." By following a similar line of inductive reasoning we cannot fail to arrive at the conclusion that the Lay Agency of Methodism, in its design and application, is admirably suited alike to the dispositions and aspirations of mankind and the spiritual wants of the world.

Of the indifference with which Lay Agency is regarded in some quarters, and the fervour with which its extended use is advocated in others, it is not our present purpose to deal. Neither do we deem it an act of prudence to de-



precate, as some have done, the bearing of the Wesleyan Conference towards it. We feel justified, however, in putting the following questions for the consideration of our readers. If in the past our Lay-Ministry has been successfully employed, why may it not be a power for good in the future? If it was held in high esteem by our fathers, what are the reasons which would induce us to look upon it with a feeling of distrust, if not of contempt? If by the early Church it was considered a desideratum, do circumstances exist at the present day which would justify its being allowed to fall into disuse? Human nature, in our opinion, is not too upright in these days, neither is society too refined, nor average intellectual capacity too elevated, to be raised, purified, and instructed through its instrumentality. May the day be far distant when, in Methodism, education shall be preferred before piety, when showy parts shall be more attractive than spiritual power, when distinction in our Church may not be attained by unordained men, and when she shall have the form but not the power of Christianity.



*SAMUEL DREW, M.A.*

PUBLIC benefactors are entitled in no small degree to the admiration and gratitude of society. That this claim is generally recognised, is proved by the fact that even after they have quitted the scene of their labours they are not unfrequently spoken of as the ever-present, generous, self-denying friends of mankind. An inexpressible charm surrounds their names and the localities which have been hallowed by their presence. Their virtues and their deeds are as seed sown from whence spring up others who are actuated by similar motives, and who strive in a spirit of emulation to serve their generation. Like the clear stream that moistens the parched ground and imparts the gladness of life to drooping vegetation, while it continues to follow its own noiseless course, so do such men communicate a reviving energy to all who require their prudent counsel or active help. Thus do they humble themselves for the welfare of others, and become gradually enshrined in the hearts and memories of their fellows. Identifying their talents with the exigences of the times, they trace out for themselves careers of unostentatious self-denial and beneficence, and become unconsciously renowned. Rough and tortuous pathways are rendered more easy to the traveller by their bearing while on the road. Sterile places are made fertile; thorns and briars or noxious weeds give place to the rose, the myrtle, or the medicinal herb through their careful cultivation. In fact, everything to which they put their hands bears thereafter, in some measure, the stamp



of their own individual character. Abstruse theories, for instance, were reduced to an intelligible form of philosophy through the genius and acquirements of Lord Bacon. The legal polity of England, which before his time had been expressed in terms ambiguous and contradictory, was rendered perspicuous and comprehensible through the acumen and learning of Sir William Blackstone. The healing art, which as a science had been hitherto but little understood by those who professed to prescribe for the physical ailments of the race, was simplified and theorised through the investigations and example of Dr William Hewson. In a manner not less important did the illustrious subject of our present attention serve universal Christendom. Of one of his literary works the following opinion has been expressed by a writer in the *Anti-Jacobin Review*:—"Whilst we are struck by a chain of argumentation strong and beautiful, we are assured that this is the production of no common writer. And in thus connecting the author with his work, we cannot but recollect with wonder that he is the untutored child of nature, deriving no advantage from education, indebted only and immediately to Heaven for a reach of thought astonishingly great, for a mind to which all the matter of the universe seems but an atom, and in himself exhibiting a splendid proof that the soul of man is immortal."

Samuel Drew was born on the 3d March 1765, and on the 24th day of the same month was baptized in the church of his native place, St Austell, Cornwall. His parents, Joseph and Thomasin Osborne Drew, were poor and uneducated, but industrious and God-fearing persons, who had an inherent love for knowledge. Moreover, they were Methodists; and such was the strength of religious principle in the head of this humble family, that he preferred in early life to brave the displeasure of an angry father, and incur



the bitterness of banishment from the paternal home, rather than sever the connection he had formed with Christ's people. Mrs Drew has been described as a woman "of courage and zeal in the cause of God, which nothing could damp;" while she was "ready to brave every hardship that the discharge of duty might render necessary." With such tastes, and actuated by such devotion to the interests of religion, we may readily conclude that their efforts were unceasing to inculcate in the minds of their children the sacred lessons of Divine truth. With what tenderness of feeling would the loving Christian mother draw her children to her side for the purpose of teaching them the will of Jehovah, and of preparing them for the active duties of life! How suitable are the precepts of God's Word to the work of training the young to have just perceptions of right and wrong! How fitting are they to produce, even in the breasts of children, inclinations after virtue, and to direct their footsteps into a course of duty in unison with the aspirations of a true Christian!

Notwithstanding the straitened circumstances in which their lot was cast, Samuel's parents endeavoured to provide the means whereby their children might be educated, and their two boys were sent to a school at St Austell. Jabez, the elder of the lads, was naturally of a studious disposition, and took delight in learning; but his brother, the subject of this sketch, hated the discipline of school, and shirking the tasks which had been allotted to him, frequently absented himself from the daily instruction of his preceptor. Mrs Drew, on learning the truant character of little Samuel, and his otherwise scampish conduct, felt constrained to undertake personally the duty of teaching him. The happy and permanent effects of his mother's training were in after life referred to by him in the following words:—"I well remember, in my early days, when my mother was alive, that she



invariably took my brother and me by the hand, and led us to the house of prayer. Her kind advice and instruction were unremitting; and even when death had closed her eyes in darkness, the impression remained long upon my mind, and I sighed for a companion to accompany me thither. On one occasion, I well recollect, we were returning from the chapel at St Austell, on a bright and beautiful starlight night, when my mother pointed out the stars as the work of an Almighty Parent, to whom we were indebted for every blessing. Struck with the representation, I felt a degree of gratitude and adoration which no language could express, and through nearly all the night enjoyed ineffable rapture." But these days, hallowed by the influence of a pious parent's love and watchful care, were soon to be ended. When he was ten years old, his mother, who had weaned him from careless indifference to his future welfare in this life, and imbued his young spirit with desires for a higher and better state of being beyond the grave, died of consumption, and he "was left without a guide, to wade through time and grapple with the tide." Lacking a mother's loving advice and gentle control, he was soon drawn within the circle of evil companionship. When the angel of his home had fled, he was without wholesome restraint, and easily fell into many youthful excesses. Nor at this do we wonder, seeing that he was not only bereft of his dearest and most trusted counsellor, but surrounded also by circumstances conducive to insubordination and sin. His father, unfortunately, was not able to give the necessary attention to the moral and religious training of his children, being engaged during the week in the labours of his calling, while on the Sabbath he had invariably duties to fulfil as a Local Preacher. Besides, he does not seem to have studied the peculiarities of Samuel's disposition, which required to be dealt with in a careful manner,



so as not to repel and harden a nature such as that of his son—"wayward, sarcastic, and sullen." His parental government was marked by the strictness of coercive discipline rather than by the constraining influence of kindness. Such being the case, the serious impressions which had resulted from the judicious treatment of Samuel by his mother were for a time effaced, and the boy was left very much to the natural bent of his own inclinations, unacquainted almost with the power and beauty of precept and example.

When he was about eleven years of age, Samuel was apprenticed to a shoemaker who resided about three miles from St Austell, at a place called St Blazey. His new condition was far from being a happy one, as every one connected with his master's household looked upon him rather as a drudge who had come to do the most menial labour, than as the apprentice to a handicraft. To the business of shoemaker his master added that of farmer, though the extent of land under his cultivation was all comprised within the compass of a few acres. As may readily be supposed, the time of the lad was frequently taken up in agricultural pursuits, instead of being devoted to the acquisition of a knowledge of the trade it was intended he should follow in after life. To the hardship of being obliged to work in the field was united the intolerable burden of harshness, ill-usage, and neglect. Many contentions and scenes of unpleasantness were the result. To such an extent was this unkindness carried, that he determined upon several occasions to run away from his master. Just as his schemes appeared to be on the eve of accomplishment, however, a gracious Providence intervened to prevent their completion. Naturally fond of adventure in its more daring moods, his longings after freedom became intensified after reading the "History of Paul Jones the



Buccaneer," and other works of a similar character. Under these circumstances, and surrounded by companions who had "not the fear of God before their eyes," the whole inclination of his life was towards a career of irretrievable ruin. After having been in the service of this unfeeling master for about six years, he was enabled to carry out his long-cherished resolve of absconding. With one shilling and fourpence halfpenny as the sum of his wealth, he started for his father's house, for the purpose of asking pecuniary assistance. His father had married again, and his step-mother, in the temporary absence of her husband, did not feel warranted to give him money under the circumstances. Not wishing to encounter the anger of his father on account of the step he had taken, Samuel left his home with no settled idea as to where his fate might lead him. Shelterless, alone, and utterly wretched, he trudged along the road with but one desire as the mainspring of his actions—to escape from the galling yoke to which he had been subjected. The circumstances of his journey have thus been described by himself:—"I thought of travelling to Plymouth to seek a berth on board a king's ship. Instead of taking the short road, where I feared my father might fall in with me, I went on towards Liskeard through the night, and feeling fatigued, went into a hay-field and slept. My luggage was no encumbrance, as the whole of my property, besides the clothes I wore, was contained in a small handkerchief. Not knowing how long I should have to depend upon my slender stock of cash, I found it necessary to use the most rigid economy. Having to pay a halfpenny for passing either a ferry or toll-bridge, feeling my present situation, and knowing nothing of my future prospects, this small call upon my funds distressed me ; I wept as I went on my way ; and, even to the present time, I feel a pang when I recollect the circumstance. The exer-



tion of walking and the fresh morning air gave me a keener appetite than I thought it prudent to indulge. I, however, bought a penny loaf at the first place I passed where bread was sold, and with a halfpenny worth of milk in a farmer's house, ate half of my loaf for breakfast. In passing through Liskeard, my attention was attracted by a shoemaker's shop, in the door of which a respectable man, whom I supposed to be the master, was standing. Without any intention of seeking employment in this place, I asked him if he could give me work; and he, taking compassion, I suppose, on my sorry appearance, promised to employ me the next morning. Before I could go to work tools were necessary, and I was obliged to lay out a shilling on these. Dinner, under such circumstances, was out of the question; for supper I bought another halfpenny worth of milk, ate the remainder of my loaf, and for my lodging again had recourse to the fields. In the morning I purchased another penny loaf, and commenced my labour. My employer soon found that I was a miserable tool, yet he treated me kindly, and his son took me beside him in the shop, and gave me instruction. I had now but one penny left, and this I wished to husband till my labour brought a supply; so for dinner I tied my apron-string tighter, and went on with my work. My abstinence subjected me to the jeers of my shopmates, thus rendering the pangs of hunger doubly bitter. One of them, I remember, said to another, 'Where does our shopmate dine?' and the response was, 'Oh! he always dines at the sign of the mouth.' Half of the penny loaf which I took with me in the morning, I had allotted for my supper; but, before night came, I had pinched it nearly all away in mouthfuls, through mere hunger. Very reluctantly I laid out my last penny, and with no enviable feelings sought my former lodging in the open air. With no other breakfast than the fragments of my last loaf I



again sat down to work. At dinner-time, looking no doubt very much famished, my master kindly said, 'If you wish, I will let you have a little money on account;' an offer which I very joyfully accepted. This was, however, my last day's employment here. Discovering that I was a runaway apprentice, my new master dismissed me with a recommendation to return to the old one; and, while he was talking, my brother came to the door with a horse to take me home." Only upon condition that he should not be compelled to return to his former master would Samuel consent to accompany his brother. On returning home his indenture was cancelled, and he remained with his father until employment was obtained for him with a person named Williams, at Millbrook. In his new situation he displayed a considerable amount of industry and skill. Here were engaged a number of workmen whose manners were in harmony with his own nature; the workmanship was of a superior description to anything he had hitherto seen; and in his carefulness and application to the work with which he was entrusted, he exhibited business habits which had before been dormant for want of opportunities for their proper exercise. After having been engaged at Millbrook for about twelve months trade became depressed, and he removed to a neighbouring town. After a short stay in the latter place, we find him engaged as a journeyman at St Austell. Then—January 1785—Samuel Drew was in his twentieth year, but past experience had taught him but little wisdom, for although he was earning what was then considered to be good wages, he was comparatively as poor as in the days of his apprenticeship, through his reckless conduct and dissipated habits. From the age of ten years until he entered the threshold of manhood, his life had been marked by a series of ordeals of the most harassing description, in a great measure the natural result



of his own conduct ; yet did he continue to follow in the path of the ungodly.

Devoted to the practice of immorality, and living continually in an atmosphere of wickedness, he attracted to his side others of a similar character, and gradually was he led on to the commission of crimes which jeopardised his life. At one time we find him near the "vortex of dissipation ;" at another he is being rescued from an upturned smuggling boat, benumbed and almost dead ; often was he in a state of extreme starvation. Under all circumstances we find him unhappy. Indeed, we cannot more forcibly describe his condition, physically and morally, than in the words of the sacred penman : "The way of transgressors is hard." Many a fervent, believing prayer had been breathed on his behalf at a throne of grace ; many bright anticipations had been warmly cherished concerning him ; but these seemed now to be buried with his mother in the grave. Sad at heart, old Joseph Drew has been heard to exclaim, "Alas ! what will be the end of my poor unhappy boy ?" But a brighter day was about to dawn. As when, after a night of deepest darkness, during which the silvery light of the moon and stars has been hidden by clouds of sombre blackness, and the belated traveller has bewailed the density of a gloom which might be felt, there suddenly appears in the heavens faint streaks of brightness, which are followed by golden rays that usher in the effulgent orb of day ; so, and not less striking, was the great moral change that was soon to be effected in the character and conduct of him whose career we are endeavouring to describe.

In the workshop where Samuel was employed, a number of persons, holding opposite views regarding Christian doctrine, frequently met for the purpose of discussing disputed points between Arminians and Calvinists. As might be expected, these debates often assumed the form of warm



contentions, into which he was unwittingly drawn. In connection with the business of saddler and shoemaker, his master also received books to bind, to the reading of which Samuel devoted his spare moments. Thus was there a two-fold source of instruction afforded, and an opportunity for gathering information presented to him, to which he had hitherto been a stranger. The longer he listened to the arguments, and read the written thoughts of others, the more deeply was he impressed with a sense of his own ignorance. But he was not one to fold his hands, and accept the mental condition in which he had discovered himself to be as one from which well-directed efforts might not raise him. No sooner had he fully realised the barrenness of his mind, than he determined upon a systematic course of self-culture. About this time, happily, a copy of Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding" was sent by a gentleman for binding. This work was read by Samuel with avidity, and the principles taught in it gave unquestionably a decided tone and bias to his intellect. He thus describes what were his feelings regarding that splendid production of a master-mind, and the effect its teaching produced upon himself:—"This book set all my soul to think, to fear, and to reason, from all without and from all within. It gave the first metaphysical turn to my mind, and I cultivated the little knowledge of writing I had acquired in order to put down my reflections. It awakened me from my stupor, and induced me to form a resolution to abandon the grovelling views which I had been accustomed to entertain." Nor was there any abatement of this feeling, much less a cessation of love for literature. On the contrary, every fresh work he perused became invested with greater interest than the preceding ones; and although he had ever and anon to refer to a dictionary while engaged in reading, he continued to master the contents of several standard treatises



in succession, and consequently to grow in intelligence. In the glowing thoughts of the mighty dead he fondly revelled ; daily did he seek to add to his store of knowledge ; and gradually, yet effectually, did he thus elevate his character, extend his mental vision, and add strength and dignity to his moral nature.

It is an old axiom that "knowledge is power," and upon the application of such a mighty agency for good or evil as Samuel Drew now possessed depended, to a large extent, the happiness or misery of his lifetime, as well as of his future destiny for weal or woe. If by enlarged mental capacities, clearness of apprehension, and more cultivated language, he was better fitted for the work of God, these great acquisitions, if abused and prostituted, only rendered him more qualified to serve the enemy of souls. His capabilities and attainments might either be used as levers to elevate him in the scale of human existence, and thereby constitute him the leader of others to a like vantage-ground, or as instruments for his own personal debasement and the degradation of his fellow-men. Before him were two roads—the way of life and the way of death—and one of these he must pursue. On one side, the genius of the world beckoned him to gratify "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ;" on the other, the Holy Spirit offered a revelation of God's love, guidance in the way of truth, and an inheritance incorruptible. His future was dependent upon the decision of that moment. By Divine grace he was led to choose the better part. Under the following circumstances was he brought to experience a personal interest in the blessings of redemption.

A young Preacher, of slight physical aspect, but endowed with energies and talents of a high order, came into the St Austell Circuit. His boyish appearance was at once the subject of conversation among the people. One elderly



member of the Society, in particular, said to himself, "Well, what does Mr Wesley think of us, to send us such a boy as this?" He was compelled, however, to form a far higher opinion of the Preacher's merits, and of the great Leader's sagacity in sending him, than the one he had prematurely adopted from his first observation of the famous Adam Clarke in the pulpit. Crowds waited upon the ministry of him who was destined to shine as a brilliant luminary in the firmament of Methodism. Samuel Drew thus describes a not unusual scene in connection with the public services of that wonderful Preacher and Divine :—"I well recollect the time when, having to preach in St Austell, the crowd was so great that he could not get into the chapel. At that time the males and females sat on opposite sides of the house, and that on which the women were being nearest the street, he got in at one of the windows, and was borne along upon their hands and heads, till, without touching the floor, he was safely landed in the pulpit." His genial manners, his forcible sermons, and his eloquent example, were made the means of salvation to multitudes. Among those who were brought to a knowledge of the truth through the instrumentality of this great and good man, were Samuel Drew and his sister, both of whom became united to the Society of Methodists at St Austell. But in their hearts sore bereavement must first prepare the way of the Lord, and render the sterile ground of their unrenewed nature a fitting receptacle for the seeds of grace.

In the year 1785 Jabez Drew became seriously unwell, and his recovery being almost hopeless, he expressed a desire to see his brother and sister for the last time. On Samuel's spirit the dying request of his loving brother acted like a magnetic shock, rousing the finer sensibilities of his nature, and evoking feelings which had been rendered torpid through the enervating influence of selfish indulgence.



From his brother he had always received tokens of truest affection, which had been sincerely reciprocated on his own part, though with less apparent ardour. With the thought, therefore, that they were about to part—perhaps for ever—came a flood of emotion too deep for utterance. Under any circumstances, the final parting of these two brothers would have been of sorrowful interest. As it was, the barrier which separated them, morally and spiritually, rendered the occasion of their being disunited on earth one of solemn and most momentous importance. The one was a Christian, with the longings, aspirations, and expectations of those who have received a portion of the blessings accruing from the life and death of their Redeemer; the other was still in “the gall of bitterness,” with no motives, desires, or prospects, save such as are realised by those who “mind earthly things.” Death was about to sever the cord which had bound them to each other. Earnestly did he, who was crossing the border-land between time and eternity, entreat the brother whom he fondly loved to consider “the error of his way,” and to “flee for refuge to the hope set before us in the Gospel.” The holy travail of Jabez Drew brought forth much fruit. The depths of Samuel’s soul were broken up, and he left the death-bed of the departing saint with a resolve to lead henceforward a life of godliness. In the good providence of God, that determination was not allowed to become as “the morning cloud and as the early dew, which passeth away.” On the day of his brother’s interment Samuel listened to a most impressive discourse, which was delivered to a large congregation in the open air by Adam Clarke. That sermon was preached from the words, “We must needs die, and be as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again,” and it proved the medium of salvation to many. Among those who were blessed upon the occasion was Samuel Drew. An interest in Divine



things was then awakened in his breast, which ended only with his life, and he was led, as the result of that sermon, to embrace those views of sacred truth with which his life and teaching were to be for ever after distinguished and identified.

A short time after this era in his life he was enabled to commence business on his own account. His master's shoemaking business having fallen off considerably, principally through carelessness and inattention to the wishes of customers, work decreased very much, and Samuel found his weekly earnings almost inadequate for procuring the means of subsistence. Many friends urgently advised the propriety of his becoming his own master. Several of these joined to their advice generous proffers of pecuniary assistance by way of loan. This friendly counsel and encouragement decided him; and within a year from the date of his beginning business on his own responsibility he had repaid a sum of money which had been advanced by one of his friends, while he found himself, with a good stock of leather, "clear of the world." But such a satisfactory balance-sheet had not been obtained without much labour and self-denial on his own part. Eighteen hours out of the twenty-four was the time he devoted to his daily work, and his food was of the plainest, though none the less wholesome, description. Profiting by the warning given in the loss of business his late employer had experienced through inattention, Samuel conducted his affairs with a strict regard to integrity and a high sense of the duty of keeping a promise. His regularity and promptitude became guarantees of an increased trade, while his sterling honesty and uniform courtesy to all who favoured him with their orders, won the confidence and support of many friends. It is pleasant to be able to record that the burden of his daily toil was considerably lightened about this time through the kindness of his sister, who



became his housekeeper. She was not only related to him by their common birth, but was truly unto him also as a sister in the Gospel. Amid all the privations to which she submitted, in the desire to keep out of debt and appear in a respectable manner before the world, we are able to discover the fond solicitude of the sister and the higher graces of the Christian. It is true that her spirit sometimes seemed to fail under the trying circumstances in which she lived, and her mind to sink for a time into a state of gloomy despondency. "But," to use her own words, "my dear, noble-minded brother was just the spiritual preceptor and comforter I wanted. When he saw me in perplexity, he would say, 'Cheer up, my sister; have faith in God; there are brighter days in store.'" Thus did these two brave hearts toil anxiously on, cheered by mutual affection, and relying upon the providential care and protection of their Heavenly Father.

By dint of unflinching industry and the most rigid economy, Samuel had so far been able to improve his worldly circumstances as to justify him in employing other hands besides his own. Thus, in the year 1788, we find him in moderately comfortable circumstances, and comparatively free from those anxieties which usually cling to a young beginner in business. With prosperity his old desire for increased knowledge became intensified, but he does not appear to have fully profited by the improved position in which he was now placed. On the contrary, much valuable time and attention was devoted by him to political discussions, into which he was almost unconsciously drawn at times through the thoughtlessness of his neighbours. Still he did not allow the warmth of debate to lessen the quantity of his own daily work, but endeavoured to redeem the mispent hours of the day by working in the silent hours of the night. How far that pernicious practice might have been



carried, to the ruin of his health and worldly prospects, we may only surmise, as he was happily withdrawn from it through a circumstance which Samuel always regarded till the close of his life as an interposition of Providence. While busily employed one night after business hours, and the shop being closed, a young urchin put his mouth to the keyhole of the door and shouted, "Shoemaker! shoemaker! work by night and run about by day!" "Had a pistol," said the object of the youngster's satire, upon one occasion, "been fired off at my ear, I could not have been more dismayed or confounded. I dropped my work, saying to myself, 'True! true! but you shall never have that to say of me again.' I have never forgotten it, and, while I recollect anything, I never shall. To me it was as the voice of God, and it has been as a word in season throughout my life. I learned from it not to leave till to-morrow the work of to-day, or to idle when I ought to be working. From that time I turned over a new leaf. I ceased to venture on the restless sea of politics, or trouble myself about matters which did not concern me." That resolution consistently carried out produced the most gratifying results. By strict attention to business his trade gradually increased; at the same time, by judiciously utilising his spare hours, he was enabled to obtain a very fair knowledge of general subjects. With the works of Young and Cowper, Milton and Pope, he made himself very familiar; of Goldsmith's writings he was passionately fond, and committed to memory the "Deserted Village;" besides making himself acquainted with the contents of every book that lay within his reach in the humble sphere in which his lot was cast. Moreover, the knowledge which he had obtained by pursuing a systematic course of reading was soon made manifest to those with whom he came into contact. His vocabulary had become thereby extended; his ideas of men and things had



become more enlarged and enlightened ; and, in consequence, he found his society courted by many intelligent persons of the neighbourhood. In keeping with his untiring industry and rigid economy was the honourable position that he occupied in 1791. He had established himself in business, his character and abilities had won the esteem of his fellow-townsmen, his piety and labours in the cause of godliness had secured for him the respect of the Church's Leaders, and in every sense his prospects were bright and cheering. Yet was it a juncture in his history. With himself rested the responsibility of directing those currents of social, commercial, and religious life which had been set in motion. Happily for himself and for the world, he was rightly guided in his choice of a wife ; his labours were devoted to a suitable sphere of religious thought and action ; and his studies were principally directed to a subject that was not only congenial to his taste, but calculated to evoke the extraordinary faculties of his mind. But in order that we may arrive at a just estimate of Samuel Drew's piety, usefulness, and talents, we shall consider his character and influence at Home, his endowments and powerfulness in the Pulpit, and his erudition and perceptivity in the Study.

In April 1791 he was married to Honour, a daughter of Mr Jacob Halls, of St Austell. In his wife he found a suitable helpmeet and co-labourer, ever ready to second all his exertions. United in heart and in purpose, they made their home a happy one. At the altar of the household they daily invoked that blessing "which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow thereto." Days and months and years, as they sped away, left them more closely bound together by the bonds of mutual sympathy and love. Still the duties of the wife were not merely nominal, nor was the avocation of the husband to be compared to the office of a sinecure. They ate the bread of industry. From early morning until



night they earnestly, yet conscientiously, sought to make a suitable provision for themselves and their family. In his old age Joseph Drew became dependent upon his son and daughter for the necessities of life. With no half-hearted compassion for the frailty and helplessness of his aged father did Samuel contribute to the support and comfort of his declining days;\* while his duties as a father always received from him the most earnest and undeviating attention. "Raised from one of the lowest stations of society, I have endeavoured," he says, "to bring my family into a state of respectability by honest industry, frugality, and a high regard for my moral character. . . . Divine Providence smiled on my exertions, and crowned my wishes with success." But paramount to all other desires regarding his children were those which had for an object their spiritual well-being. To the end that his little ones might become familiarised with the grand storehouse of Divine truth, he made it a rule that they should each in turn read a chapter from the Bible, during the regular devotional

\* Joseph Drew died in the year 1814. "For some time previous he had given up his small farm and retired to a lodging, depending wholly for his support upon our author and Mrs Kingdon, his daughter. Shortly before his death, Mr Drew [Samuel] had him removed to his own chamber, where the old man breathed his last. In a letter to one of his children he speaks thus of his aged parent:—'In him I behold an evidence of what vital religion is able to accomplish. Having made his peace with God, and lived in a state of preparation for eternity, the prospects of death and judgment are so familiarised to his view that he can contemplate both with tranquillity. May we be equally prepared!' A few weeks after, he writes—'Your grandfather is no more. He departed this life in the full triumph of faith. May you and I follow him, as he, for more than sixty years, followed Christ, that, like him, we may at last end our days in peace! On the preceding evening, when I asked him how he was, he replied, "Strong in faith—full of hope—my fears are wholly gone." Thus "like a shock of corn fully ripe" was the old man gathered into the heavenly garner.'"—*Memoir of Samuel Drew, M.A., by J. R. Miles.*











exercises of the household. This wholesome practice produced very gratifying results in those for whose benefit it was instituted; and, in after life, the memory of a time when, as young Scripture Readers, they took alternately their place beside the Family Bible, served to warn them against the evil which is in the world, and lead their thoughts to a contemplation of the goodness of Him whose love is infinite, and whose tender regard for the welfare of his children is Divine! Within the magic circle of Samuel's home, therefore, were centred the dearest hopes and most ardent desires of his life. Around it were clustered the happiest memories of a checkered past. In it he was supremely blest. Home! The little word contained to him all that was worth living for on earth, and suggested to his mind the higher, holier antitype, which it was designed to illustrate and symbolise by the great Father of all.

For the work of preaching the Gospel he was peculiarly fitted, alike by his familiar grasp of the loftiest subjects, and his clear, forcible method of declaring the truth. His personal appearance, the subject-matter of his discourses, together with the manner of his delivery, were calculated to impress favourably the minds of his hearers. From the time of his entering upon the duties of a Lay-Preacher until he was removed to a brighter sphere of existence, his services were highly appreciated and much desired by the people to whom he was known. When twenty-four years of age, his name was placed upon the Plan of the St Austell Circuit; and, in the diligent fulfilment of his appointments, he served the Connexion faithfully for a period of thirty-one years. His outset in the work, however, was not unattended with circumstances of a disagreeable character. But these he treated with that candid consideration and independent bearing for which throughout life he was distinguished. Receiving with implicit confidence the testimony



of some person who possessed a larger share of "this world's goods" than did most of his brethren in the Church, to the effect that Samuel Drew's teaching was tinged with Calvinism, the Superintendent summarily dismissed him from the office of Local Preacher and that of Class-Leader. Calvinistic views he had never entertained, and the careful preparation of which his sermons gave evidence almost precluded the idea of such a charge being well founded. Still, without being called upon to defend the orthodoxy of his faith and the soundness of his teaching, he was publicly deposed from offices which had conferred honour upon himself and given spiritual advantages to the people to whom he had been a Steward in the Gospel. But this peremptory and unjust treatment of one who had already given promise of much usefulness in Methodism was not quietly submitted to by the brethren, nor was the caprice of one man allowed to effect the overthrow of another, without a protest being uttered by members of the Society. Justice was speedily demanded and obtained. From all parts of the Circuit urgent requests were made to the Superintendent for the restoration of Samuel to the offices from which he had been ejected. These solicitations were acceded to with little hesitation on the part of the former; but the stern sense of rectitude which characterised the conduct of the latter, seemed for a time to put an insuperable barrier in the way of its fulfilment. On no account would Samuel resume his duties until the question of his heterodoxy had been sifted to the bottom, and himself exonerated from the stigma which he felt rested upon his reputation, and threatened to neutralise his efforts in the cause of religion. "Sir," said he to the Superintendent, who had asked him to resume his work on the Circuit, "the matter is quite public. You have put me out at the door, and I shall not come back through the keyhole. Before I resume my Plan I must be



publicly justified." At the first meeting of Local Preachers thereafter, his doctrine, after a searching inquiry, was pronounced to be Arminian, and not Calvinistic; his conduct was justified from all blame; and he was unanimously requested by his brethren to continue his services, both as a Local Preacher of the Gospel and as a Class-Leader in the Church. That intermission to his unwearied labours was the only one he experienced during a long series of years.

As a Preacher Samuel Drew abounded in anecdotes, most of which were doubly interesting from the fact of being associated with events in his own life or experience. In the recital of these incidents he not only exhibited such an acquaintance with language as enabled him to depict vividly whatever he intended to describe, but by the judicious use of the natural humour he possessed, exerted upon the minds of his hearers an influence similar to that which had originally been felt by himself while an actor in the scenes, or while engaged in reflection upon the circumstances in question. Narratives were handled by him in a dexterous but discreet manner; illustrations were cited in elegant and pointed terms, while never appearing to be out of place; and—himself a poet of no mean order—euphony in words and harmony in sentences seemed to come from his lips spontaneously. When, however, he applied himself to the study of a discourse, the result was a closely-connected chain of reasoning, which he pursued intently until he had, by an imposing array of evidence, convinced his hearers of the accuracy of his propositions and the soundness of his arguments. Not unfrequently did he select as topics of his discourses the doctrine of the resurrection, the immortality of the soul, the evidences in favour of the validity of the Bible, and other subjects requiring on the part of a Preacher all the discriminating and perceptive powers of the judicial mind. Nor were the people wearied with such searching



investigations after truth. On the contrary, these ingenious disquisitions on abstruse theological doctrines were delivered in a manner which aroused the present attention, and gave matter for after-thought on the part of those who were privileged to listen to them. The following opinions regarding the metaphysical acumen which was exhibited by Samuel Drew when engaged in the work of preaching, fully bear out what has just been said upon the point. The first quotation is from an article in the *Christian Advocate*. That which follows was written by a gentleman who frequently heard him preach in London, during his stay there.

“The acuteness of Mr Drew’s perceptions, and his quick and clear apprehension of the successive links in the chain of an argument, combined with uncommon facility and volubility of utterance, though entirely unassisted by any of the graces of oratory, obtained and secured attention without ever wearying it. It is probable that few persons who have heard Mr Drew preach, entertained so clear notions of the subject on which he discoursed as those which they received on hearing him; and the monotopicism of his sermons was the less to be regretted, as in the great variety of pulpit talent there are few preachers who have the ability, or, having the ability, are governed by the inclination to introduce the metaphysics of theology into the pulpit.”

“Mr Drew’s sermons were delivered extemporaneously, and, though highly argumentative, were truly evangelical. Notwithstanding his natural aptitude for abstruse and subtle disquisition, the various striking remarks with which his oral addresses abounded were sure, even in regard to the plainest understanding, not only to rivet attention but affect the heart. The impressiveness of his discourses could not be imputed to extravagance either of voice or gesture; yet



he was an energetic and efficient Preacher. This I attribute to his fervour of spirit ; to the uncommon pains he took, first to select and submit an important proposition, and then to prove what he proposed ; and to his endeavour to explain and enforce upon the judgment and conscience of the hearer the truth under consideration."

To his own mind, the subject of any one of his discourses was clear as the noonday in all its details, and in words fitly chosen did he portray it to the view of his congregation. His thoughts might be compared to so many brilliants, but without the tinsel settings of pedantic learning or arrogant presumption. He had, no doubt, drank deeply himself at the fountain of knowledge, but with all the simplicity of a child did he impart information and instruction to others. He was thoroughly original as a preacher, and yet at the same time natural and unaffected. Indeed, so popular did he become, and so great was the demand for his services in advocating the claims of various schemes of religious usefulness, that a Sabbath-day rarely passed without finding him actively employed in the work of his Master.

We have already adverted to the immediate cause of his becoming a student ; now we would more particularly note some of the circumstances and influences which attended the literary career of the talented subject of our present attention. His first effusions were—like those of many other thoughtful men—of a poetic character, and had for their themes, "A Morning Exercise," "An Ode on Christmas," "Reflections on St Austell Churchyard," and other subjects of a kindred nature. These efforts were, however, but the ebullitions of fancy, and were indulged in simply as harmless means of mental recreation and exercise. With his early attempts at prose-writing the case was different. Of these latter lucubrations, it may be said that they were



the offspring of necessity rather than of inclination. The first occasion which called forth his efforts as a prose writer was a momentous one, and gave opportunity for proving the sincerity, the faith, and the charity of the Christian, as well as the profundity, perception, and argumentation of the metaphysician. A young doctor with whom Samuel was acquainted was much impressed by the sophisms of various infidel writers, but especially by Paine's "Age of Reason," and, in consequence, appeared to be fast drifting towards the quicksands of infidelity. Instinctively the heart of the humble but earnest Methodist Preacher yearned towards him who had been captivated by the subtilty, and charmed by the brilliant scurrility, of that most inveterate infidel. Deeply impressed as he was with the truthfulness of the religion he taught in the pulpit, Samuel naturally concluded that it would be, comparatively speaking, an easy matter to eradicate the seeds of evil which had been sown in the young man's breast, and for that purpose engaged him in conversation upon subjects involving the authenticity of the Bible, as the inspired word of an ever-living, ever-present God. Soon did he discover, however, that a deeper knowledge of Divine truth than he had yet gained was absolutely required by him ere he could reasonably expect to cope successfully with the sophistries of atheism. For the purpose, therefore, of being able to explain Scripture more fully, and fitting himself for the work of solving problems or removing doubts, he studied earnestly and wrote copiously. After several discussions upon the subject, it was mutually agreed upon that a searching investigation of the Book should be instituted ; that all proofs in favour of, or against, the truth of revelation should be collected and arranged ; and that this should be done with the sole end in view of discovering the genuineness of its origin and teaching, or proving conclusively its counterfeit character and



consequent worthlessness. The results of this controversy were the conversion of the young man, who soon afterwards died in the faith; an able refutation by Samuel Drew of the propositions and arguments contained in the "Age of Reason;" and the kind patronage and warmest regard of the Rev. John Whitaker, Rector of Ruan Lanyhorne, towards the humble but highly gifted author. After once appearing, and that successfully, in the ranks of authorship, he became emboldened for the struggles of a literary life, and ere long his pen was again wielded in the cause of religion. The Rev. Richard Polwhele, Vicar of Manaccan, having published a work entitled, "Anecdotes of Wesleyanism," in which a most violent attack had been made upon the members of that body, and facts concerning them had been grossly misrepresented, Samuel Drew undertook a written defence of the Methodists, and endeavoured to free them from unjust aspersions contained in the work in question. That he was fully justified in so doing will be apparent to the candid observer, from the fact that Mr Polwhele's antagonism was engendered by a controversy in which he was engaged with Dr Hawker of Plymouth, who was one of the most consistent champions of Calvinism of the age in which he lived, and the Church in which he held an important charge. The merit which attached to this able defence of Methodistic faith and practice will be apparent to our readers, from the author's own *résumé* of the work in which he had been engaged. "I have," he says, "now gone through the facts themselves, and have given a specific answer to every anecdote which is worthy of notice. Out of thirty-four, eight are false; of six I can give no account; nine are misrepresented; five are related with the omission of many material circumstances; and all the remainder are revised and corrected." This reply, although spirited and to the point, was entirely free from language which might



give offence to his opponent and provoke retaliation. Indeed, it seems to have created a feeling of respect and esteem in Mr Polwhele towards Mr Drew, which feeling was strengthened and increased on the publication of the latter's "Essay on the Soul," and exhibited in a marked degree by a most favourable critique on that treatise, from the pen of Mr Polwhele appearing in the *Anti-Jacobin Review*. In the year 1802, the first edition of the Essay was published by subscription, and speedily disposed of, principally among the nobility and gentry of Cornwall. It is entitled, "An Original Essay on the Immateriality and Immortality of the Human Soul, founded solely on Physical and Rational Principles." The copyright was sold to Mr Edwards of Bristol, after the first publication, for the sum of twenty pounds and thirty copies of the second edition, which latter also met with a ready sale. Thus was the author brought into public notice. In the meantime, however, he had formed an acquaintance with several gentlemen of scholarly attainment—the Rev. Dr Lyne, the Rev. William Gregor, John Britton, Esq., and others—who, with his esteemed friend the Rector of Ruan Lanyhorne, already named, readily placed their extensive libraries at his command, and thus gave him invaluable assistance in his literary studies and pursuits.

Besides the popularity which resulted from Samuel Drew's personal efforts as a litterateur, his name, origin, and talents were made known to the outside world, through the means of works which treated of the various features of his native county. Of these latter may be mentioned "Polwhele's Literature and Literary Characters of Cornwall," and "Britton's Cornwall." As may readily be imagined, the cobbler-metaphysician of St Austell became an object of attractive curiosity to those who visited the neighbourhood. But such notoriety did not exert a baneful influence upon



his mind, or lead him to neglect his self-imposed tasks. On the contrary, heedless alike of the applause or opposition of others, he arduously prosecuted those studies which had engaged his attention before his name had become famous. After completing the work on "The Immortality of the Soul," he began a treatise on "The Identity and Resurrection of the Human Body." With this subject he experienced much difficulty; and even after he had expended considerable time and labour in collecting and arranging his materials, and in finishing the manuscript, he abandoned for a time the idea of publishing, for it was not allowed to go to press until the year 1809. Previous to that year, however, he had relinquished business as a shoemaker, and had devoted himself to literary pursuits alone, under an engagement with the celebrated Dr Coke, whose onerous duties in connection with the extension of Missions prevented him from giving personal attention to literary work which he had undertaken. That important step opened up a brilliant future for the metaphysician. Hitherto he had been encumbered with the cares of business, and had struggled against difficulties that would have appeared insurmountable to ordinary men. The thoughts which had passed through his mind, or the line of argument to which he had been directed during the day, and hastily jotted down amidst the work of the shop, were elaborated and fortified, for the most part, under circumstances which were calculated to divert the mind from the subject, and lead to its abandonment. Referring to the obstacles which then obstructed his pathway, he says, "I have no study; I have no retirement. I write amidst the cries and cradles of my children, and frequently, when I review what I have written, endeavour to cultivate 'the art to blot.' Such are the methods which I have pursued, and such the disadvantages under which I write." On a "low nursing-chair,"



with the bellows on his knees to serve as a desk, were those works of Samuel Drew written which were given to the world previous to 1805, the year that marked an era in his life—"when," observes his son, "allegiance to St Crispin was dissolved, and the awl and lapstone were exchanged for the pen." The literary work on which he had entered was very varied in its character, comprising the explanatory, the historical, the controversial ; and to these classes of subjects he was fully expected to bring not only superior knowledge but adaptability of talent. With strong confidence in the great abilities of the metaphysician, Dr Coke called in his assistance for the purpose of completing a Commentary on the Bible, upon which the Doctor had been engaged. Over this work Mr Drew expended much time and thought in suggesting new ideas, in lopping off redundant expressions, and in bringing it into a uniform shape, so that it might be worthy of the esteem of the Wesleyan Connexion. These improvements were adopted by Dr Coke, and the work, in two volumes, was brought to a successful termination in 1807. In a similar manner also did he revise and correct, enlarge and mould, Dr Coke's "History of the West Indies, Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical, with an Account of the Missions instituted in those Islands," in three volumes, which appeared in the years 1808 and 1811. Besides these productions, there are others bearing the same name that unmistakably present the originality of conception, strength of language, and critical acumen of Samuel Drew, and with the production of which he was intimately associated. But Dr Coke did not seek to disclaim his connection with the metaphysician. The sole reason why the copartnership was not made publicly known, was the peculiar position in which the Doctor was placed ; for, had circumstances admitted of its being done, the name of



Drew, along with that of Coke, would have appeared upon the title-pages of those works. So high, indeed, was the estimation which the Father of Missions entertained for Drew, that he earnestly desired the Conference to make with the subject of this sketch terms of a permanent engagement. To this proposition, however, some objections were raised, and, after being introduced at a subsequent Conference, the subject was dismissed.

The embarkation of Dr Coke for the West Indies, in 1812, together with the non-acceptance of Mr Drew's services by the Conference, left him without the usual means of providing for himself and family. In this painful dilemma, it is pleasing to observe, he was not allowed by his admirers and friends to remain. Dr Clarke, his spiritual father and ever-faithful friend, obtained for him introductions to the conductors of the *Eclectic* and other Reviews, which resulted in engagements of a temporary, but sufficiently remunerative, description. For other labours, of monetary value, his master-pen was anxiously sought, and to these he applied himself with astonishing efficiency. At this period he was importuned to print a discourse delivered at Redruth, under the title of "Scriptural and Philosophical Arguments to prove the Divinity of Christ and the Necessity of His Atonement." Yielding to this pressing solicitation, he published the sermon: the copyright of which, after it had passed through two editions, was sold for a sum equal to that of his famous "Essay on the Soul." Nor was this the end of the matter, for it provoked in one Thomas Prout an attempted reply. Again, therefore, Drew was urged to write on the subject, and once more, in compliance with the entreaties of his friends, he published, in the spring of 1814, a closely-printed pamphlet of eighty-four pages, designated "The Divinity of Christ, and the Nec-



sity of His Atonement, Vindicated from the Cavils of Mr Thomas Prout and his Associates." Like its predecessor, the pamphlet received an extensive sale, and by large numbers of people was read with avidity. His reputation as an author had ere this been made known in almost every part of the kingdom, and during the course of the year 1814 overtures were made to him, by metropolitan and provincial publishers, for the production of works on various subjects. Such proposals, being neither satisfactory to himself nor approved by his friend Dr Clarke, whose advice in the matter had been solicited, were not entertained. In the meantime, however, the Rev. Professor Kidd, of Aberdeen, desired Mr Drew to subject his (Mr Kidd's) "Essay on the Trinity" to a critical examination, and in due time to return it with such emendations and suggestions as appeared to him desirable. Accordingly, a careful revisal of the work was made, and so conscious was the Professor of the value of the revision, that, upon the metaphysician's suggestion, he reconstructed a large portion of his treatise.

Before the close of the year, Mr Drew had also commenced the "History of Cornwall, from the Earliest Records and Traditions to the Present Time," in two volumes 4to, which, says a local historian, "though not exempt from error, is the best that has yet been written." This work, the largest of Mr Drew's literary productions, was projected by Fortescue Hitchens, Esq., of St Ives, who had prepared not more than two or three sheets of MS. when he was removed by death. It was then placed in the hands of the former for execution, and in 1500 quarto pages he performed the arduous task, although, unfortunately, its issue was, through the failure of the publisher, attended with pecuniary loss to himself.



But little time was allowed by him to pass away unemployed, nor did he long remain without work of great importance, for which he received a corresponding recompense. Previous to his entering upon the labour of compiling the "History of Cornwall," the death of Dr Coke had been announced, and, in conformity with the wishes of the deceased, the executors had meditated making arrangements with Drew for the production of a memoir of the Father of Missions. When, therefore, the subject had been brought before the Conference, and had been sanctioned by that body, negotiations were entered into by the parties in question for the attainment of the object proposed. This work, distinguished "by much original thought, a spirit of rational piety, great keenness of discrimination, and numerous philosophical reflections," was completed by Ladyday 1816, and after passing through several hands for examination and correction, was published in 1817. About this time he was strongly urged by some of the leading ministers of Methodism to write a refutation of the new modification of Calvinism, as given to the world by Dr Williams, in his "Essay on the Equity of Divine Government:" but with these oft-expressed wishes he could not comply, as he concluded that the sale of the work would not be commensurate with the excessive labour of its preparation. Besides, he had already resolved upon issuing his "Essay on the Being and Perfections of God." This treatise, prepared at the instance of Professor Kidd, and submitted to the Rev. William Gregor for criticism, was written in competition for the "Burnet Prize," given in August 1815. Though unsuccessful, it was regarded by several eminent scholars as a wonderfully able dissertation, and as such its publication was urgently desired. Referring to this work, a critic in the *Investigator* writes:—"In order to form a



notion of the vast penetration and profound capacity of the author, we need only read the table of contents ; but an attentive perusal of the work itself will reward the intelligent reader with an expansion of his ideas to an extent not usually derivable from books on similarly abstract subjects. A new direction will be given to his meditations, and pleased with a strength of thought and variety of topics altogether new, it cannot fail, we should think, to rouse his energies, stimulate his efforts, and awaken his ardour in the pursuit of knowledge." Thus did he, as occasion presented itself, and as necessity demanded, worthily serve the interests of the Christian Church. By bold yet repeated efforts he strove to roll away the stone of reproach from Methodism ; by a skilful hand he endeavoured to delineate in lines of beauty the grand verities of our holy religion ; while, in defining the relationship subsisting between man and his Maker, between time and eternity, he was anxious to lead the sinner to an intimate and loving acquaintance with God. In the treatises that emanated from his pen, there are abundantly shown not only extensive research and nicety of arrangement, clearness of mental vision and dexterous description, but strength and vigour of intellect, together with a sanctity of bearing, all of which proclaim his mind to have been of an imperial caste. But in addition to the works we have already enumerated, others of smaller compass, such as "A Letter to the Friend of the Church," "An Elegy on the Death of Mr John Patterson, who was Drowned at Woodebridge," should be mentioned ; all of which, with the numerous critiques contributed to the *Wesleyan Magazine* and other periodicals, amply illustrate his unwearied industry, as well as the variety of subjects that he handled.

Incessant application, as we have seen, marked his existence during the period between the years 1812 and 1818,



when he entered upon an engagement which he honourably held to the close of his brilliant career. The situation to which we refer was that of editor to the "Imperial Magazine, or Compendium of Religious, Moral, and Philosophical Knowledge," and was offered to him through the medium and recommendation of Dr Adam Clarke. In several letters the Doctor urged upon Mr Drew the acceptance of this position, as being a very profitable and important one. Eventually Mr Drew visited Liverpool, and while there entered into arrangements with Mr Fisher, the proprietor of the Caxton establishment. With as little delay as possible he also addressed himself to the preliminary work of writing circulars, drawing up prospectuses, drafting out the subject-matter of the early numbers, and on the 31st March 1819 the first number of the Magazine, containing a portrait of the editor, appeared. This periodical, bearing as it did the name of Drew, and embracing his efforts on diversified subjects, commended itself to the reading public, whose appreciation of it was presently manifested in the large number of copies that were circulated. In the month of June, only three months after the first issue, he writes, "Our Magazine goes on exceedingly well. We have sold, thus far, upwards of 7000 of each number." As time advanced, the demand for the publication increased: a sure evidence of the ability with which it was conducted. Scarcely had two years elapsed, however, when the Caxton establishment was literally burnt to the ground; and though this catastrophe did not bring to a termination the publication of the Magazine, the printing works were removed from Liverpool to London. With the transfer of the place of business to the metropolis, Mr Drew's residence became changed, and thenceforward he was settled in London. There his life was one of increasing activity, not only in the



profession he had adopted, but also in various spheres of Christian usefulness in which he delighted to labour. Through his hands passed the whole of the works that were issued from the Caxton Press ; while the offices of Class-Leader and Local Preacher demanded from him, for the right discharge of their important duties, much careful preparation. In the social circle, too, his pleasant companionship was frequently courted, and his surpassing conversational powers placed under arrest. Thus was his sojourn in the capital of the empire characterised by laborious industry and considerable usefulness.

Previous to Mr Drew's arrival in London, his wife had not been able, through unavoidable circumstances, to leave Cornwall. Now, however, Mrs Drew and three of the children were again with him whom they ardently loved. Oftentimes in their new abode did the husband and wife contrast, with gratitude, their humble beginning with the honours and comforts of their advancing age, their early struggles with the crowning mercy of their Heavenly Father ; and with pleasing anticipation did they look forward to the time when, with independent means, and in the bosom of their affectionate family, they would quietly spend their evening of life. Alas ! the tie of conjugal love was soon to be broken. It was Mr Drew's desire to visit once in every three years his native county, and this inclination he was enabled to gratify. On the occasion of one of these triennial visits, in 1828, he was called to pass through an ordeal of uncommon severity. The beloved partner of his life, whose health at the time was not robust, accompanied him to the scene of their early days ; but while on their tour she was seized by a serious illness that terminated fatally. After spending a fortnight in St Austell, they went on to the residence of one of their daughters at Helston. On



arriving at this place, Mrs Drew, feeling herself unwell, immediately retired to rest. From that bed she rose not again. Before many hours had elapsed indications of cholera were presented; on the following day these symptoms became alarming, and about midnight her spirit quitted its earthly tabernacle. She was, however, prepared for the great and solemn change. Although sudden, her end was peace. To Samuel Drew this was a blow from the force of which he never fully recovered.

His struggles in the world had been great; but, in comparison with this dispensation of Providence, no cup so bitter had been presented to his lips, no day so dismal had dawned upon him, no test of reason and of faith had been applied to him. Under the like circumstances he had been able to counsel and comfort others; but now, when the strings of his own heart were wellnigh broken, he looked not to himself for consolation and support. His trust was in the Lord our God. Appropriately does the words of Eliza Cook express the state of his mind—

“ I have searched the sacred page,  
I have heard the godly speech;  
But the love of saint or sage  
Nothing holier can reach.  
Pain has wrung my spirit sore,  
But my soul the triumph won,  
When the anguish that I bore  
Only breathed—‘Thy will be done!’”

“When my wife died, my earthly sun set for ever,” he exclaimed upon several occasions; and to a considerable extent this was true. The bereavement created a breach in his constitution which was never afterwards fully retrieved. His health from this time, indeed, gradually declined, his mental powers seemed to relax, and impaired bodily vigour



indicated the advance of age. By the death of his wife he had been rendered solitary ; and, four years afterwards, his loneliness was much increased by the demise of his early, able, long-tried, and loving friend, Dr Adam Clarke. Still he performed his work, however, though in an enfeebled condition ; sometimes doing it with ease, but never with the pleasure and zest of former years. Between dejection of spirit on the one hand, and strain of his mental powers on the other, it was evident that he was daily sinking. Nevertheless, he was loth to consider his health as precarious ; and wishful, for the sake of his children, to retain his editorial position, he continued to pursue the labours of his office till compelled to retire from the same through great prostration. At the urgent solicitations of his family he allowed himself to be examined by a physician, who pronounced his case a very serious one, requiring instant cessation from business and perfect rest. He then went to the office of Mr Fisher for the purpose of resigning his appointment, and making arrangements for his departure from London ; but the consequent exertion and excitement were more than he could combat in his then debilitated state. Much exhausted, he sank upon a chair in Mr Fisher's office, and was removed to the house of his daughter, being unable to walk there without assistance. Desirous of seeing again his native county, he left London on the 11th of March 1833, and travelling by easy stages, reached Helston in the course of five days.

To his physical debility there was added occasional mental aberration, which gave to his children much anxiety and pain. Still they hoped that, by skilful treatment and careful nursing, he might be longer spared to them. But human aid was unavailing. The hour of dissolution had come ; his sun was setting, the darkness of death was



deepening around him ; soon the pitcher was to be broken at the fountain and the wheel at the cistern, the dust return to the earth, and the spirit unto God who gave it. To His faithful servant at this critical period God was peculiarly gracious. Before him was a "vision of the throne ;" his spiritual eye beheld his home in the skies ; the chamber where the good man lay was rendered resplendent with the sunlight of heaven. At one time he would say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul !" or, "Thank God for all His mercies !" On another occasion he said, "I have the fullest hope and the most unshaken confidence in the mercy of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Afterwards he exclaimed, "O glorious sunshine ! Yes ! blessed be God, I shall enter in ! Will the Lord leave my soul in darkness ? No, He will not. When the door is opened, I shall enter in. Yes, I shall !" Notwithstanding his fitful wanderings of mind, thus was he honoured with rich revelations of the Divine glory ; and in this manner was his sanctified spirit kissed to rest. On Friday evening, March 29, 1833, he departed this life, with the high esteem of the learned, the loving regard of the Church, and "the honour that cometh from God." Often had he taken the portrait of his wife from the nail upon which it hung, and had pressed it to his lips, saying, "I shall be with you soon." One grave contains their remains. On the Tuesday following the day of his decease his body was interred in Helston Churchyard, and over his final resting-place a memorial stone was subsequently erected, on which a suitable inscription is displayed. Nor were the inhabitants of St Austell slow to recognise the deserving merits of their illustrious townsman. In the Wesleyan Chapel of that place a plain marble slab was fixed, recording the conversion of Mr Drew through the instrumentality of Dr Clarke, and his connection with the Wes-



leyan Society. A handsome tablet was also placed in the parish church, bearing the following inscription :—

TO THE MEMORY OF  
 S A M U E L   D R E W,  
 A NATIVE OF THIS PARISH,  
 WHOSE TALENTS AS A METAPHYSICAL WRITER,  
 UNAIDED BY EDUCATION,  
 RAISED HIM FROM OBSCURITY  
 INTO HONOURABLE NOTICE,  
 AND WHOSE VIRTUES AS A CHRISTIAN  
 WON THE ESTEEM AND AFFECTION  
 OF ALL WHO KNEW HIM.  
 HE WAS BORN MARCH 3, 1765,  
 LIVED IN ST AUSTELL UNTIL JANUARY 1819,  
 AND, AFTER AN ABSENCE OF FOURTEEN YEARS,  
 DURING WHICH HE CONDUCTED A LITERARY JOURNAL,  
 HE RETURNED TO END HIS DAYS IN HIS NATIVE COUNTY,  
 AS HE HAD LONG DESIRED,  
 AND DIED AT HELSTON, MARCH 29, 1833.  
 TO RECORD THEIR SENSE  
 OF HIS LITERARY MERIT AND MORAL WORTH,  
 HIS FELLOW-TOWNSMEN AND PARISHIONERS  
 HAVE ERECTED THIS TABLET.

Were we called upon to select an exemplar for the young, we could not adopt one more fitting, in most respects, for the purpose, than the subject of this chapter. If industry and success, combined with genuine godliness and a happy death, form component parts of true excellence, then there was an embodiment of these in the life of Samuel Drew. As soon as he discovered his abject condition, he industriously applied himself to the work of self-improvement. Much he needed information, and diligently therefore he



sought for knowledge. Seizing every useful book that lay within his reach, he in a manner devoured it. So ardent was his spirit of inquiry, and so great his determination to educate himself, that during many nights his eyelids were but little closed in sleep. Time thus improved was turned to golden account. Not only was his intellect enlarged and strengthened, but new sources of knowledge were discovered by him through self-application. Thus he ascended to a higher altitude of being, and his pleasures, with his usefulness, were enhanced and extended. For a considerable time he laboured eighteen hours a day, and this assiduity was crowned with blessing. Labour, like the fabled philosopher's stone, was all-powerful, making rough places smooth, and the desert to abound in fruitfulness. The dignity to which he attained was of no mean order. At one time we see him seated on a cobbler's stool; afterwards he is offered the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of London. At one period of his life he is called "Sammy;" at another he is styled "Samuel Drew, M.A., of Marischal College, Aberdeen," and elected a member of the Manchester Philological Society. When he had arrived at manhood, he was almost ignorant of the English language, but ere he had passed the limits of time he was entitled to be designated "The Metaphysician." With what propriety was the appellation of "The English Plato" ascribed to him! No ancestral name can, we think, be compared with the imperishable title of him of whom we write. On a wider basis and a firmer foundation than can be found in merely ducal renown rests the fame of Samuel Drew. Several persons of literary distinction have tendered their quota of praise to his worth. From these we select the following as a sample of many that might be cited. Professor Kidd, D.D., in writing to Mr J. H. Drew, says of his talented father:—"In his 'Essay



on the Immateriality and Immortality of the Human Soul,' he had Locke as a guide, and yet in many things he has exceeded his master. In his 'Essay on the Being and Attributes of the Deity,' he had Clarke before him, and he is far more profound than Clarke on that sublime subject. But in his 'Essay upon the Identity and Resurrection of the Human Body,' he had no guide. Here his whole capacity is shown in its native energy and power of thought; here his vigorous mind displays its great natural resources in unfolding a subject so deep and so interesting. In this he appears Samuel Drew indeed, yet this is the least known of all his works."

With such a reputation as he possessed, we are not surprised at his mingling with many distinguished litterateurs of the day. Of these, not a few were his cordial friends. In the Wesleyan Community this was eminently the case. Coke and Wood, Clarke and Watson, Treffry and Jackson, are names that will ever appear in bold relief upon the historic page of Methodism; and with the persons just named Mr Drew enjoyed the several relationships of a brother, a counsellor, and a friend.

In Adam Clarke, Richard Watson, and Samuel Drew, Methodism was well represented; from their labours she reaped plentifully, and bitter was the pang which entered many a heart when their deaths were made known. For a short period they were as "lights in the world." Nearly together they disappeared from the firmament of time; but now they are denizens of that city which hath "no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." But from whatever standpoint we look at Samuel Drew, we see in him much to admire, imitate, and reverence. His life was a practical comment on the words, "Seest thou a man diligent in business? He shall stand before kings;



he shall not stand before mean men." "The hand of the diligent shall rule." How inseparable, too, is the connection between a life of doing and of blessing! Their union is seen in the career we have now sketched.

In 1785 he had entertained thoughts that were to be coexistent with his being; then also he had cherished feelings and principles by which his name was to be written in the book of fame; while, at the same time, he was passing through circumstances which, when wisely treated, would lead him on to immortal blessedness. The thought was not present with him, that his way through life should be a reputable one, that his mode and strength of conception should be well-defined and herculean, and his moral influence on the people alike beneficial and extensive; but it was so. His pursuits, like the melted wax, received from the signets of right habits, right principles, and right application, the impression of that well-worn truth, "God helps the man that helps himself." Literature, as a mine, yielded her golden treasures to his earnest efforts as a diligent student, and by her rich lore was he elevated to the dignity of a prince among his fellows. Religion, with her awful verities and highest virtues, admitted him, on his repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, to the way of happiness and heaven. Labour was followed by success; victories won whetted his desires for further triumphs; and from his life, governed by the law of Christ, radiated streams of light and life and blessing. Nor is his influence upon the Church yet unfelt; neither can he fail to be an instrument of good to the world while his masterly works are extant.



## WILLIAM DAWSON.

ELOQUENCE may be defined as the art of absorbing the attention, arresting the judgment, and touching the heart by the potent power of language. Entering the avenues which lead to the mind, it portrays the character and object of a subject, and then excites in the auditor a feeling of admiration or repugnance regarding it. It does not affect and please merely, but captivates and carries the hearer whither it listeth. The various passions, like the strings of a musical instrument, vibrate at the touch of the master of eloquence, who is bound by no arbitrary laws, and fettered by no time-worn precedents. Indeed, where but little attention is paid by an orator to what are usually considered as requisites in his art—such as arrangement and neatness in composition or style, and gracefulness in delivery—true eloquence may exist, as the offspring of natural powers which may not be confined within the limits of custom, or restricted to the forms and practices of the schools. An eminent divine has said, “Nature teaches every man to be eloquent when he is much in earnest.” Illustrations of this truth are found in the affectionate greetings of friendship, the grief-stricken countenance of bereavement, the attitude of poverty, and the mien of gratitude: all of which are but different phases or moods of the eloquence of nature. Deep passion and forcible expression are almost inseparable qualities. Plutarch relates that a person upon one occasion sought the advocacy of Demosthenes against another who had assaulted him. “Not you, in-



deed," replied the orator, "you have suffered no such thing." "What!" said the applicant, raising his voice, "have I not received those blows?" "Ay!" exclaimed Demosthenes, "now you speak like a person that has been really injured." The name of Socrates is associated with the highest form of dialectic eloquence, and yet the proud position he attained as a speaker was not to be attributed to the possession of unlimited knowledge, but rather to the exercise of a natural wisdom and facility of expression, which enabled him to clothe his ideas in language suitable to the occasion, and gave to his utterances a power and beauty alike captivating and elevating. In like manner, the fame achieved as an orator by Earl Chatham was to be traced rather to the spontaneity and aptitude of his illustrations and his own inherent abilities, than to his great learning, large experience, or thorough training. One of the grandest oratorical effects produced by that eminent statesman was by the timely use of a homely simile, which was calculated to find an echo in the breasts of the meanest of his countrymen. "By the British constitution," he said, "every man's house is his castle; not that it is surrounded by walls and battlements; it may be a straw-built shed—every wind of heaven may whistle around it—all the elements of heaven may enter it; but the king cannot—the king dare not." Thus have the greatest orators been distinguished for "holding the mirror up to nature," and thus was the illustrious subject of our present attention endowed with the faculty of eloquence. His statements were made in simple yet graphic language; his delineations were truthful, finished, and fascinating; his portraitures were lifelike, and fitted either to inspire holy emulation or to excite wholesome detestation; while all the powers of his natural genius and spiritual endowments were dedicated to the noblest work and to the highest purpose. That this conse-



cration of his whole being to the service of the King of kings was not without abundant fruit, was evidenced in the conversion and salvation of thousands.

William Dawson was born at Garforth, a small town seven miles from Leeds, on the 30th March 1773. He was the eldest of a family of ten children. His father, Luke Dawson, was steward to Sir Thomas Gascoigne, and in that capacity superintended the working of a colliery, which situation he held for a period of twenty-one years. At the age of fifty-one he departed this life, leaving to his widow, Ann, the care and labour inseparable from the rearing and training of a large family. At his father's death William was eighteen years old, and consequently able to realise in a great measure the extent of the calamity which had been brought upon the household. With the younger ones the case was different; but their mother, who was endowed with remarkable powers of mind, and had a sacred regard for the claims of religion, endeavoured to shield them as much as possible from the painfulness of their bereavement, and proved herself in other respects fully competent to discharge faithfully the onerous duties which devolved upon her.

During the first six months of William's life, his existence was marked by excessive debility and almost incessant crying. To that early exercise of his lungs he humorously referred in after life, when called upon to account for the unusual strength of those vocal organs which he happily possessed, and so freely used. On the removal of his parents to an adjacent village, he was taken, while yet a child in arms, to the house of his grandfather at Whitkirk, where he stayed for nearly five years. While there, an incident occurred which manifested his faculty for imitation, and proved that, in his case at least, "the child *was* father to the man." While engaged at play one day with one of his companions, he ventured within the precincts of the



church during the absence of the sexton. Undeterred by the sanctity of the building—the two friends being too young to feel impressed with any sense of solemnity which the structure might be able to awaken in the breasts of older people—a game at “parson and clerk” was proposed and carried out. To William was assigned, by himself, the more honourable distinction of “the parson,” while, as a matter of course, his companion was obliged to content himself with the less dignified position of “the clerk.” Animated by an innate spirit of mimicry in the young exponent of the usual duties of one who holds the former office, the reading-desk was entered and the Bible opened—the immense size of the book requiring a considerable amount of physical energy on the part of the child. Then the verses of a chapter of Holy Writ were distinctly read by William, who, for the purpose of adding to his height, had elevated himself by means of a hassock or two which lay near, while he ever and anon glanced from the empty pews in the silent church to the head of him who stood beneath him as a humble assistant in the extemporised service. Well might his mother say, when she came to know how he had been employed on that occasion, “That boy was born to be a preacher.” With such precociousness of intellect and liveliness of disposition, it was well for the lad that his parent placed him under that moral discipline and training which were calculated to mould his character aright, and foster what promised to be good points in a nature singularly impulsive and impressionable.

On his return to Garforth, William was sent to the school of Joseph Cormack, Barwick, where he made but little progress. Afterwards we find him under the tuition of the Rev. W. Hodgson, then Curate of Garforth, but here too his education was much neglected. Again he changes his teacher, and is placed under the care of Mr Ephraim Sander-



son of Aberford, who had as many as forty boarders, besides a larger number of day-scholars. Under the latter he made considerable advancement in learning, and completed his course of education. In the meantime, his regular attendance at church, and the religious instruction he received at home, were calculated to foster in him a regard for piety.

In company with his parents, he attended for four years the evangelical ministrations of the Rev. Myles Atkinson of Leeds ; afterwards he was the constant and attentive hearer of the Rev. W. Richardson, an eccentric but talented minister of the Gospel ; then, successively, he sat under the preaching of the Revs. Thomas Dikes, John Graham, and R. Hemington, from each of whom he received instruction in righteousness, and with all of whom he became more or less intimate as an earnest seeker after salvation, and as a reliable helper in the work of God. As supplementary to the knowledge of Divine things he acquired under the public teachings of those faithful Ministers of the Word, he read and studied "The Practice of Piety," "Drelincourt on Death," "Flavel on the Soul," and other works of a similar character : all of which served to deepen his spiritual convictions, and lead him to "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Yet from his mother, more than from any other source, did he receive that counsel and knowledge, that influence and assistance, which ultimately led him, in the good providence of the Almighty, to appropriate to his soul the merits of the atonement of Christ. Often during his public life did he close a tender and pathetic appeal to his hearers with the words, "I owe much to my mother." How sweet the relationship, yet how grave the responsibilities of a mother ! How endearing the dependence, the confidence, the love of childhood ! How solemn the charge of an immortal spirit, whose flight



through time and destiny in eternity may be directed and moulded by a maternal influence !

It is natural to suppose that young Dawson would seek to associate with those of kindred sentiments and habits to his own. Two of his companions, John Batty and Samuel Settle, were of signal service to him ; for when in their presence he could speak without restraint, and thus relieve his mind of oppressive thought, besides profiting by their experience, influence, and prayers. By the good example and advice of these young men, he was encouraged to seek earnestly the pardon and peace of God. On their first acquaintance with each other, Samuel Settle was a farm-servant, but he was afterwards received into Holy Orders. He had already obtained the witness of the Spirit, and with a view to the edification of his friend, he testified to him of the new birth, and the principle, operation, and evidence of the Divine life. This profession and exhortation on the part of his companion left the most salutary impression upon William Dawson's mind. Hitherto he had venerated the holy precepts of Divine revelation, but without realising the preciousness of their import ; he had struggled against the dominion of sin, but had not seen Christ as his own Deliverer ; he had gazed upon the Tree of Life, but had not as yet tasted of the fruits of redeeming love. After a night of profound spiritual darkness, however, came the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness, in whose bright beams the soul of the young disciple basked with ecstatic joy. Burthened with sin, yet full of contrition for his transgressions, we find him one day sitting by the side of a hedge, after having wandered for some time in the fields, disconsolate and alone. His thoughts are suddenly arrested from a moody reverie into which he had fallen, by the friendly notes of a feathered songster that is hopping from twig to twig in the neighbouring bushes. " Here," he soliloquises,



“is a little bird happy, while I—possessed of an immortal spirit, born for heaven, cared for by a watchful Providence, fed, sheltered, protected, redeemed, with salvation within reach, and the very heaven for which I was born offered—am yet unhappy!” How wonderful are the ways of Providence! At the bidding of the God of Israel, ravens ministered to the physical wants of His servant Elijah. By the same care and goodness one of His creatures is made the messenger of comfort to the moral and spiritual nature of one of His children; for the “chirp, chirp,” of the little bird, sounding in the ear of William Dawson like “Cheer up! cheer up!” is rendered a medium of blessing, and made the means of imparting feelings of resignation and tranquillity to his troubled heart.

Some time in the year 1791, when he was about eighteen years of age, William was made the recipient of that “peace which passeth all understanding.” The circumstances under which he obtained the blessing were of the most hallowed description. The place was the church at Barwick, the occasion the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. As Mr Graham administered the ordinance to him, saying, “The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life: take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart, by faith, with thanksgiving,”—every barrier of unbelief was broken down, and to his ravished sight Christ was made manifest in the plenitude of saving grace. Then a new principle of a higher life was infused into his being; then the happiness of true religion was realised and enjoyed by him. In the most emphatic sense of the Scriptural doctrine, he had become “a new creature in Christ Jesus.” Like Christian in the grand allegory of the immortal Bunyan, he had been the subject of strong convictions; he had waded through the Slough of Despond,



he had climbed the Hill Difficulty, he had entered the Strait Gate, and he had looked upon the Cross, until every band was unloosed, and the burden of sin had been rolled from off his shoulders, and cast into the Pit of Forgetfulness. Such was his wonder, love, and joy, that had he been the possessor of all the riches this world contains, he would not have accounted it too much to render as a tribute of thanksgiving to the Almighty for His boundless, matchless grace. Happily, his condition as one who had been "born again" was not of a temporary nature, neither was the joyous state of mind in which he now lived transient in its character, nor was it calculated to leave nothing behind it save sad remembrances. Rather might his spiritual life, with its aspirations and joys, be compared to the blossom which gives promise of the fruit, the bud that indicates the unfolding of the flower, or the early dawn that foreshadows and heralds the approach of a bright and cloudless day. Renewed in the spirit of his mind by the power of the Holy Ghost, he yielded not his members as servants unto sin, but as servants of righteousness unto holiness, that the end thereof might be everlasting life. By prayer he held communion with God, by reading he made himself familiar with the Scriptures, by self-examination his walk and conversation became such as agreed with the religion he professed, and by practical piety he gave evidence of a sincere desire to serve the Lord in his day and generation. Thus did he daily manifest the power of a union with his Redeemer, and show that he was growing "in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Early in the year 1792 he began a diary, in which he carefully recorded the dealings of God with his soul. At this time, likewise, he wrote several papers on religious subjects, and the Ministers of the Church, perceiving in him a rare development of the Christian graces, as well as the



possession of superior talents, sought his active co-operation in conducting "Cottage Services," a scheme of usefulness that had been instituted in the parish. Thus did his character and reputation receive form and strength. For a period of about nine years from the date of his conversion, he was a communicant of the Church of England : adhering to all its customs, faithfully discharging to the utmost of his ability such duties as were assigned to him ; and so long as he could labour zealously within its pale he was supremely happy. The well-being of the parish lay near his heart. He was an unwearied visitor of the sick, and a diligent and able instructor of youth, while few occasions of affliction, bereavement, or sorrow were allowed to pass without being embraced as opportunities for giving friendly assistance, consolation, or advice to those who stood in need of his Christian sympathy and aid. At the "Cottage Services," where he was a constant attendant, his exhortations were held to be invaluable : being earnest of those stirring appeals which in after life breathed the essence of Evangelical doctrine, and on account of which his name became as a household word throughout the land. The Vicar of Thorparch held him in such high regard that he called upon William on one occasion to pray in the church, after the morning sermon ; and at another time, in the absence of the Minister, we find him solicited by the Congregation at Seacroft to perform the duties of the sacred office. His reading of the Church-Service, and the sermon which was afterwards preached by him, gave very general satisfaction. Referring to those early days, Mr Graham writes :— "During the whole of my residence of five years and a half at Barwick, in Elmet, as Curate, which terminated with the year 1796, I knew him intimately, and loved and valued him as a brother. His natural vigour and originality of mind, his clear and comprehensive views of Scrip-



ture doctrines and duties, his experimental knowledge of Christ and His salvation, and his solid yet fervent piety, seemed only to require a more regular and extended education to make him what indeed he became without it—‘a burning and a shining light.’ Having occasionally, in my absence from home, conducted for me a sort of Cottage Lecture, in which his talents and gifts correspondingly displayed themselves, I often expressed to him my wish that he would enter upon a course of preparation for the Ministry in the Church of which he was then an attached member. But his zeal for Christ and for souls would not permit him to wait three years in silence and study.” The counsel of his friend Mr Graham found a partial echo, however, in the breast of him whose life forms the subject of these pages. He industriously applied himself to the study of Latin, as a preliminary step to further and more extended prospection in the field of learning. Moreover, his name had been brought before the members of the Elland Society, an institution at Halifax, which had for its object the assistance of young men, in a humble position in life, who desired to enter the Ministry; and he was encouraged to expect material aid from that source, although its funds were very low at the time. Unfortunately, the Elland Society did not realise that amount of support which its founders expected would be forthcoming, and in consequence, its operations became narrowed to a very limited sphere. Restless with uncertainty and “hope deferred,” William Dawson remained for a considerable time a prey to anxiety, yet still animated by an ardent desire for active service in the Church. Another source of uneasiness to him was to be traced to circumstances which had a tendency to restrict his labours and hamper his efforts for good. He had been rebuked for selecting a text from Scripture as the groundwork of his discourse at a Cottage



Service, and had also received intimation that a less vociferous style of delivery on his part was desirable. Even his manner in church had become an object for criticism, and he was advised to follow the custom of others in regard to non-essential particulars. Such restraints could not be passively submitted to by a disposition such as his, and they naturally resulted in his estrangement and separation from the Established Church. From the time of his conversion, the chief aim of his life had been the glory of God and the extension of the Saviour's kingdom, while his heart was filled with veneration and love for that branch of the visible Church by whose means he had been brought to feel an interest in Divine things. It was, therefore, after much self-examination, and with feelings of bitter regret and sorrow, that he carried out a resolve to leave the Church of his fathers.

At such a turning-point in his history as has just been described, we find him at the commencement of the year 1800. Previous to his union with the Wesleyan Society, he had upon many occasions taken a prominent part in the public services of that body, but without having any idea of leaving the Church of England, until compelled to do so by the force of circumstances. At Scholes, Colton, Seacroft, Swillington, Little Preston, Whitkirk, Aberford, Garforth, Kippax, Halton, and other places, he had laboured with great acceptance to the people, yet without meeting in Class. Actuated by a love for souls, he had gone forth into other Churches than his own, and, in a truly catholic spirit, had unfurled the banner of the Cross. In course of time, too, the solicitations for his services became more numerous than he could comply with, although he had an ardent liking for the work, and readily undertook every engagement that seemed capable of accomplishment. Purely, therefore, for the luxury of Christian labour did he associate himself with the "people called Methodists."



He little thought that his attendance upon their Love-feasts, Watch-nights, and Prayer-meetings, together with an active co-operation in many schemes of usefulness, would resolve into a close and abiding connection with them, and a lifelong testimony to the soundness and purity of Methodist polity and doctrine. But such was the case, for we find that on the 3d July 1800, he commenced to meet in the Class of Thomas Stoner, father of the Rev. David Stoner of Scholes. This was a discreet step, and it led to the happiest results. Hitherto he had lingered between Episcopalianism and Methodism: clinging to the first on account of its associations, while drawn towards the latter by its adaptability to the exigencies of the times. Upon entering the Wesleyan Community, however, all feelings of vacillation or divided allegiance vanished, and his services being placed at the disposal of the Superintendent, his labours became more regulated, concentrated, and consequently more successful.

In the month of February 1801, being seven months after having joined the Society, he was received as an accredited Wesleyan Local Preacher. His first sermon after reception was based upon the words in John x. 27, 28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." It was delivered at Ledstone and Scholes, on the 22d February, and the Word ministered by him was attended by demonstration of the Spirit, many being convinced of sin and finding freedom. At this early period of his history, the efforts he put forth in the pulpit riveted the attention of the people, stirred the hearts of multitudes, and were productive of gracious and abundant fruit. Indeed, with such success were even his earliest public ministrations as a Local Preacher attended, that his name spread far and



wide as that of an earnest and highly-gifted messenger of the Truth, while by the people to whom he was more immediately known he was regarded with feelings of the most estimable and affectionate nature. Having given evidence of the possession of high qualifications, and made industrious use of his gifts, the Ministers of the Leeds Circuit frequently sought him as a supply for their own appointments. Accordingly we find him occupying pulpits in Leeds, Hunslet, and Holbeck, Fenton, Tadcaster, and Towton, Armley, Allerton, and Wortley, as well as many other places. Many persons followed him from one chapel to another on the same day ; while one of his hearers has been known to travel a distance of twenty miles for the purpose of listening to his utterances. Indeed, he had not been a preacher more than eighteen months when he was unanimously recommended at the Quarterly Meeting for the full work of the Ministry ; and in the Stations of the Conference of 1802 his name appears, with that of Mr Pilter, for Wetherby, near Leeds. Towards the sacred office he had unquestionably a strong inclination ; and now that he was solicited to enter it, he readily gave his assent, and sought to make suitable provision for the family at home. But here difficulties of an almost insurmountable character presented themselves. His removal from the situation of colliery superintendent was calculated to entail serious loss upon his mother and her younger children, unless an arrangement could be made by which his brother Richard might succeed him, and thus shield the family from hardships to which they would otherwise be exposed when deprived of their principal stay and support. It would appear that Sir Thomas Gascoigne's steward had at first assented to the proposal that the younger brother should take the post vacated by William ; but, as the final step was about to be taken, it was discovered that the steward had a per-



sonal friend in view for the situation. In consequence of that timely discovery, William, for the sake of those he held most dear on earth, was obliged to pause before severing his connection with the colliery, and at once communicated to the steward his decision to continue his own services. This was as unexpected by that functionary as it was desired by his friends at home; for since the death of his father he had been the joy and comfort of his mother's heart, while he had taken almost a parent's place in the affections of his brothers and sisters. Immediately upon thus deciding, William wrote in detail to Mr Barber, his Superintendent-Minister, on the subject; and in the course of the same month he met, singularly enough, Mr Bramwell (many of whose sayings seemed to wear the garb of prophecy), who thus addressed him, "Billy, I think you ought not to go out to travel: the time has not yet come; you have not done all your work at home." These words removed in a great measure any regrets which naturally lingered in his breast after the great disappointment he had experienced; and after much prayerful study, searching self-examination, and alternation of despondency and hope, we again find him moving amidst the circumstances and conditions of country life.

Neither the trial through which he had lately passed, nor others of an equally heavy character, damped the ardour of his evangelistic spirit, or quenched the flame of sacred love that burned within his breast. On the contrary, he applied himself with greater zest, if possible, to the momentous and continually increasing duties that devolved upon him. At this time he had two Classes—one at Scholes and the other at Barwick. The members of these had been considerably increased by the powerful preaching of Bramwell and Miller, and they received a due share of the solicitous regard and careful attention of their Leader. For a considerable period



William Dawson had been extremely anxious to have what was then designated a "Preaching-House" erected; and soon after his decision had been made to stay at home, he set out upon a tour for the purpose of soliciting subscriptions towards that object. Between June 1803 and April 1805 he collected the sum of £150, 7s. 9d., made up by donations which ranged in amount from "Benny Swift's shilling to Mr Warner's five pounds." The building was opened for public worship, on the 29th April 1804, by Mr Thomas Taylor—a large congregation being assembled on the occasion, and the presence of the Lord being manifestly felt—when he who had been the founder of the sanctuary exclaimed, with a heart overflowing with gratitude, "What hath God wrought!"

As has been before stated, his zeal for Christ, though not regulated by stated appointments, was warm and impetuous, inducing him to comply with every demand for his services, though sometimes such engagements were attended with considerable sacrifice to himself. In the year 1804 we find him, at one time, labouring in the Birstal Circuit; at another, he is preaching in Scott Street Chapel, Hull; while upon other occasions he was called upon to deliver funeral orations over several of his friends who had "fallen on sleep." As time moved on apace his reputation increased, until his services were desired by Societies beyond the bounds of his own immediate district. During the years 1810 and 1811, pressing invitations were made for his assistance in connection with Sunday-school Services, the opening of new chapels and the re-opening of old ones, sanctuaries in debt, and other causes relating to Church extension or support. At Wakefield, Halifax, Rotherham, and elsewhere, we find him labouring under the most cheering circumstances and with the most gratifying results. Nor do we wonder at his popularity and success as a Preacher,



when we take into consideration his vivid and fascinating pictures of the truth, his felicitous and happy expression of ideas, his dramatic power, which readily adapted itself to every subject and to any occasion, his prayerful spirit, his intimate knowledge of the letter, and deep experimental acquaintance with the spirit, of Scripture—all of which conspired to make a forcible impression upon the minds of his hearers. Here, perhaps, it may not be out of place to give one or two quotations from what has been handed down to us as part of his pulpit utterances.

On commencing a service at Colne, where at the time commerce was at a low ebb, and the people for the most part were in distress, he said, “When I am engaged in preaching occasional sermons, I am often presented with a number of notes containing different announcements. After reading them I put them in my pocket, where they sometimes inconveniently accumulate, till I reach home. Going into the fields, I occasionally take them out and look at them, to see whether any of them are worth preserving. I read one ; not being worth anything, I tear it into fragments ; up comes a breeze, and away the shreds fly. I look at a second, a third, a fourth, and a fifth—tear them, and scatter them in the same way.” With this preface he adverted to the character of the times, to the wisdom and goodness of an overruling Providence, to the Christian’s duty with respect to placing constant and unlimited confidence in God, when surrounded by circumstances of adversity as well as when supplied with the bounties of prosperity ; and then, as the congregation gazed upon him spell-bound, he gave out the hymn—

“ Give to the winds thy fears !  
Hope, and be undismayed :  
God hears thy sighs, He counts thy tears ;  
God shall lift up thy head.



“Through waves and clouds and storms  
He gently clears thy way ;  
Wait thou His time : So shall this night  
Soon end in joyous day !”

The effect upon the congregation was thrilling. Their hearts were relieved from care and inspired with hope. Entering into the spirit of the hymn, they felt animated with new life. Upon another occasion, referring to the adaptation of the Gospel to the spiritual wants of the world, he said, “The penitent says he is unworthy—that it would be presumption in him to look for pardon. What! presumption to do what God commands—to take what He offers! In the suitableness of the Gospel to thy state—for I address myself to thee, poor penitent—thou hast only to advert to the case of the criminal in his cell for an illustration. The criminal is visited—he is told that a person has left him a thousand pounds—he feels the kindness, but it avails him nothing—*to be hanged to-morrow!* It is added, he has become an heir to an estate—is shown the title-deeds, but no comfort—*to be hanged to-morrow!!* The king’s coronation robe is thrown around him, but this is only solemn mockery—*to be hanged to-morrow!!!* At length his majesty’s pardon arrives, but ‘it is too good news to be true!’ When once persuaded of the fact, then, ‘Oh! what a sovereign! what a sovereign! I will bless him all the days of my life!’ Yes! penitent spirit! though guilty, the Gospel offers thee pardon through a Saviour!”

Suchlike illustrations were delivered with a marvellous ability, and natural, unstudied skill, and frequently conveyed realistic impressions to many who heard him. Numerous instances might be cited in proof; but the following will serve to give to the reader some idea of the vividness of his imagery, and the magic-like influence it exerted upon



congregations. The incident we are about to describe is related in connection with a sermon preached by William Dawson from the text, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." One of his auditors—a pedlar by trade—from a custom he pursued of using his *ellwand* as a walking-stick, had so worn down the ends of that necessary implement of his calling as to earn for himself the *soubriquet* of "Short-measure." Under the sermon he was variously affected. While the preacher weighed, as it were, several characters daily to be met with in life, and declared their respective weights, he of the yard-stick approved the results, and inwardly praised Dawson's acuteness in estimating at their true value the principles of men. The sermon proceeded, until at last a perfect description of the pedlar's own individual character was unfolded to the mental view of the congregation and himself. His countenance became troubled, his whole frame shook with emotion, until, unable to control longer his pent-up feelings, he broke the object of his agitation and conviction across his knee, saying as he did so, "Thou shalt do so no more!"

On visiting Sunderland for the first time, he was taken by his friend Mr Donell of Durham to see the lifeboat, which was carefully examined by him in all its parts, and used as a similitude in his sermon to the sailors whom he had specially come to address. During the discourse he portrayed a wreck upon a rock-bound coast, the elements raging, a storm-tossed, broken ship, the mariners clinging to the mastless hull and to fragments of the wreck, their home at hand, their friends in sight, themselves beyond the reach of human aid. As Dawson depicted the harrowing scene in a tone and manner peculiarly his own, every eye was fixed upon him, every breast heaved with sympathy for the imaginary crew. "What is to be done now?" asked the Preacher, after a climax of descriptive word-painting.



“All is going, going for ever!” “What is to be done?” exclaimed a sailor with stentorian voice from the midst of the congregation, “why, launch the lifeboat!” Upon another occasion, when engaged in preaching from the parable of the Prodigal Son, a striking effect of his pulpit power was produced. After describing the various features in the prodigal’s history previous to the time of his degradation, he detailed minutely the circumstances which led to the outcast’s repentance and return to his father; and after he had delineated the steps of the homeward journey, until the wanderer had come within sight of the paternal abode, habited in rags, and otherwise an object of loathing to all but the loving father whose authority he had contemned, the Preacher continued, “Yonder he comes, slipshod! make way, make way, make way there!” At that moment many persons in the congregation, swayed by his eloquence, turned round in their seats, and glanced towards the door, as if expecting some one to enter the chapel who would answer to the thrilling description given of the repentant prodigal. But, as has been already stated, these were not solitary instances of unusual and startling effects being produced by the oratorical powers of William Dawson. He had not only the mental aptitude for creating spontaneously grand ideas and striking situations, but natural gifts also, which enabled him to display and describe these in such a manner as to rivet the attention of his hearers, and bring their thoughts and feelings into harmony with his own. As in the camera obscura we see reflected, in infinite detail, the features of the outstretched landscape, the streets of a city, and the moving figures of men and animals, so in him of whom we write there was that comprehensiveness and nicety of descriptive talent which combined to render his sermons accurate reflections of reality and life.

From the year 1811, when he ministered at Hull, to that



of 1823, a period of twelve years, he was constantly engaged in one sphere or another of religious service. But during that time the Wesleyan Missionary Society obtained a considerable portion of his Christian sympathy and support. As the representative of the Baptist Missionary Society, the Rev. Andrew Fuller—a man of fine parts and thorough earnestness in the work of God—preached at Leeds on behalf of Missions, and Dawson was one of the congregation. The crying wants of the heathen, and our duty, as that of Stewards of the Gospel, towards them, were described in forcible language, and with pathetic feeling. Such was the effect upon Dawson's mind, that he became enraptured with the thought that the whole earth should be "filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." After enumerating some of the results which had followed in the track of the great Pioneers of Missionary Enterprise, the preacher asked in tones of energy and enthusiasm, "Where will it end?" Full of emotion and holy love, Dawson answered in an audible voice, "In heaven!" With the savour of Andrew Fuller's eloquent appeal in his heart, Dawson attended the first meeting of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, which was held on the 16th October 1813, in the Old Chapel, Leeds. Unexpectedly a proposition to be submitted to the meeting was placed in his hands for the purpose of receiving the benefit of his powerful advocacy. Although somewhat taken by surprise, and placed at considerable disadvantage by the fact of his not having had an opportunity of preparation for the occasion, he was able to acquit himself in a manner that reflected credit upon the speaker, and conferred benefit upon the noble Society then in its infancy. On account of its intrinsic value, as well as being among the first of Missionary addresses, we subjoin portions of Dawson's speech verbatim :—"Mr Chairman,—I rise with pleasure before



you and this congregation, because I believe that the grand object of our meeting is under the distinguished smile of Jehovah. You know, sir, that the intention of our assembly here to-day is to propose, adopt, and prosecute the best plan of spreading 'pure and undefiled religion' to the utmost extent of our abilities. Noble design! Methinks the happiness of surrounding angels is augmented when they behold these projects and the spirit with which we enter into them. They anticipate the season when these plans will be executed, when they will have new melodies to raise over penitent sinners returning to God. . . . Is a missionary meeting under the peculiar approbation of God? With humble gratitude I would answer, So is ours. The best of all is that God is with them. Stand in the centre of Great Britain and ask concerning our ministers, Have they laboured, or do they labour, in vain? Thousands upon thousands would immediately answer, No. Fly over to the West Indies and ask, Have they laboured, or do they labour, in vain? And fifteen thousand voices answer, No. Stand upon the vast continent of America and ask once more, Have they laboured, or do they labour, in vain? Upwards of two hundred thousand voices answer, No. But let us concentrate our views and inquiries. I now look around upon this congregation, and though we are in the presence of many of our dear fathers and brethren in the Ministry, I ask you, Have they laboured, or do they labour, in vain?" As if the whole assembly he addressed had but one thought, and was inspired with the same spirit that animated the speaker, hundreds of voices answered, "No!" with united emphasis, and spared him the trouble of repeating his negation. "To-day we are met to devise the measures best adapted for attaining this important object, and I trust we shall not meet in vain. If we possess any proper sympathy for our fellow-creatures, if we feel



any powerful sense of our superior obligations to God, we shall neither be the last nor the least in Missionary efforts."

The meeting at Leeds was speedily followed by many others in various parts of the country, to several of which Dawson received the most pressing invitations. Shortly after the institution of the Society, in the spring of 1814, we find him at Wakefield, York, and other large towns, advocating the claims of Missionary schemes upon the attention, sympathy, and support of professing Christians, besides labouring for the furtherance of the work in villages within and without his own District. Indeed, his name became so closely identified with the Wesleyan Missionary Society, that engagements of the most onerous character were fulfilled by him, while he endeavoured to discharge other claims upon his time and attention arising from causes which were subservient to the well-being of his Church and her people. Upon his mental ability, as well as upon his powers of physical endurance, great exactions were made. He was frequently required to stand and pay his tribute of toil beside men of undoubted intellectual and oratorical greatness, such as Richard Watson and Jabez Bunting, yet did not his star pale before the light of those luminaries of Methodism. Towards all with whom he came into contact—high or low, learned or illiterate, rich or poor—he comported himself with the same Christian courtesy and kindness, while his holy daring and burning eloquence won alike the esteem of the rostrum and the reverence and love of the pew. His zeal in the cause of Christianity was of an unflagging, invincible character. New chapels were opened by him at Knottingley on 22d September 1816, at Selby on 19th November 1817, at Hunslet on 20th November 1819, and at Wortley and other places. From Bristol in one part of the country, to Barnard Castle, Darlington, Durham, Sunderland, and Newcastle in another, we find him engaged,



as well as at intermediate places. On the 14th September 1818, he preached at a place near to Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, in the presence of a vast congregation of about ten thousands persons, the occasion being immediately after the death of that man of God, Mr William Bramwell. At Hull he pleaded the cause of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and, while doing so, he feelingly acknowledged the Rev. Mr Dikes—formerly Curate of Barwick—as his spiritual father.

From his pen emanated biographical accounts of Mr Popplewell of Harewood, Mrs Stoner (mother of the Rev. D. Stoner), Mrs Newby of Barwick, Mrs Broadbelt of Hillinghall, and others. His addresses to children were pleasing, instructive, and calculated to produce lasting impressions. His life bore witness to the good which may be effected by the judicious distribution of tracts; while the fruits of his other labours were found in backsliders being reclaimed, drunkards being made sober, the profane becoming chaste in speech, the polluted becoming pure, and in a constantly increasing membership of his Classes. Of the extent of his journeys and other demands upon his physical strength throughout that long period of his life which was devoted to the glorious work of preaching the Gospel, no adequate idea could be conveyed within the limits of this sketch. To the efficacy of his preaching the following tribute was borne by no less an authority than the Rev. John Angell James. Alluding to the occasion of Dawson's preaching at one time in Birmingham, the well-known and talented Independent Minister said, "I have heard some of the boldest and most original conceptions that I ever heard uttered, and clothed in language signally remarkable and powerful." In the Metropolis, in provincial towns, and in obscure country villages, his ministrations were highly valued and blessed above measure—a fact which is verified



by his having received invitations from Societies in almost every place of importance throughout England, as well as in the less conspicuous towns and hamlets where his name first became known.

With unimpaired bodily constitution, and undiminished mental ardour and spiritual powers, he is found zealously labouring during the next period of twelve years, *i.e.*, from 1823 to 1835. His public ministrations throughout that term of his life bore, in a remarkable degree, the stamp of mature experience controlled by clear judgment, of cultivated talents enriched by ripening graces, of superhuman efforts attended by the unction, approval, and blessing of the Almighty. As the number of his years increased, his popularity became intensified, until it had permeated English Methodism. Placarded in public thoroughfares, or in the columns of the press, might be seen, and not unfrequently, too, the renowned names of Dr Clarke, Richard Watson, Jabez Bunting, and Robert Newton, in close proximity to that of William Dawson, the humble farmer of Barnbow. Had it not been placed incontestably on record, we could scarcely have given credence to the statement that the latter took a prominent part in the opening services of some of the most important chapels of the Connexion, in conjunction with such celebrated Divines and Preachers as we have named. Indeed, the fact of William Dawson having assisted at the inauguration of Brunswick Chapel, Leeds, Eastbrook Chapel, Bradford, and similar structures in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Sheffield, Halifax, and other centres of commercial activity in various parts of the country, is of itself sufficient to show the high estimation in which this good and gifted Local Preacher was held by those who were privileged to listen to his eloquence, or to witness his personal example of practical religion. Ever did he seek to keep in view the sanctity of his



holy calling, and to arm himself under all circumstances with the panoply Divine. He was no mere hunter after popularity. The high regard in which he was held was simply a tribute from his brethren to the excellence of his character, his great attainments in the Divine Life, and the amplitude of his spiritual talents. His being requested to preach the funeral sermons of David Stoner, who died at Liverpool, 23d October 1826, and of Dr M'Allum, whose decease occurred soon afterwards, not only indicated the personal esteem in which he was held by those from whom the requests emanated, but witnessed to his ability to perform such onerous duties satisfactorily. From him, indeed, relatives, friends, and brethren had great reason to expect unvarnished testimonies to the worth of the departed; and the sacred impressions which accompanied his holy deliverances on the occasions referred to, gave not only pleasure to those who had been instrumental in securing his services, but were in accordance also with the solemn events which were then made the means for imparting lessons of warning, reproof, counsel, and consolation. With the departed, while they lived, Dawson had an identity of aim and purpose—"the glory of God." In the breasts of each and all there had been an affinity and union of feeling—"the love of Christ constraineth us." Their individual labours had been alike incessant—"in season and out of season." They had been cheered by the same immortal hope—"as an anchor cast within the vail." Their reward was the same—"an inheritance incorruptible." During the sermon on the death of the first of these good men and faithful servants of the Lord, William Dawson described his deceased friend as one from whose hand the trumpet had fallen, and, looking round upon the large assemblage with earnest solicitude, he asked, in his own deeply impressive manner, "Is there no young man in this congregation willing to take up











the fallen trumpet?" The interrogation found an affirmative response in the breast of one of those addressed. Another trumpeter was raised up to sound the "Gospel Call." As the preacher proceeded to enforce the lessons of David Stoner's life, Samuel Entwisle inwardly resolved upon entering the Ministry, for which duty he had for a long time been impressed with serious convictions. It is also to be noted with satisfaction that many others also received benefit of the most enduring character, as the result of William Dawson's sermon that day.

At all the places visited by him from time to time, he sought for a revival of pure and undefiled religion; and, when the great object of his untiring efforts was in any measure fulfilled, the flame of holy zeal spread to the adjoining neighbourhood. While holding up the Cross of Christ to the view of others, he strove to conceal himself behind the person of the Saviour. Although gifted with unusual powers of eloquence, he sought not their display, but laboured with a single eye to the glory of God in the conversion of sinners. As the result of occasional visits paid by him to various Societies in different parts of the country, congregations were largely augmented, and in consequence, a larger income was produced wherewith to extend the Circuits, and give an impetus to schemes for the promotion of true morality. His services thus became fruitful, not only on account of the good which was effected directly through his personal instrumentality, but also because they were of great monetary value to the Connexion. Funds were plentifully cast into the treasury whenever he opened new sanctuaries, conducted Sabbath-school services, or addressed missionary meetings. Almost every condition and circumstance of life was laid under tribute to the work of Christ.

Seizing an opportunity at the most propitious moment, he



was frequently enabled to make golden gain out of apparently trifling events.

His visits to places out of his own Circuit would number, probably, nearly one hundred in a year. In 1832 he visited the Metropolis, and preached at Kensington and Lambeth, Southwark and Walworth. In 1833 he was twice at Sheffield and Nottingham, and four times at Manchester; while the scenes of his more frequent labours were in the counties of Northumberland, Durham, Lancashire, Cheshire, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, Lincoln, Warwick, Bedford, Norfolk, Northampton, Gloucester, and Cambridge. Such a large sphere of operations was not, of course, overtaken without much physical exertion and self-denial. In those days long journeys could not be accomplished by rail, and in the soft-cushioned, well-appointed railway carriage of more modern days, but by the old stage-coach, on horseback, or on foot. With this fact in remembrance, the following extract from his diary wears a somewhat marvellous aspect:—"From the 27th June till the 3d July (1832) travelled three hundred and forty miles—preached ten sermons—was only three nights in bed—and repose, during each night, about three hours and a half." In June 1834 the following entry appears:—"Returned home. Travelled by cross-roads, in nine days, upwards of two hundred miles, and exercised sixteen times. As was my day, so was my strength. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!" Had not his constitution been one of the hardiest, he could not have undergone such excessive fatigue, and the tear and wear consequent upon long and almost incessant travelling. With the care of his farm and business demands continually claiming his attention, it is indeed surprising that he should have been able to accomplish so much; for it may truly be said that his itinerant labours, considering the distances travelled and the time occupied in doing so, are



without a parallel in modern times, not even excepting those of the Rev. Robert Newton.

At the close of the year 1835, William Dawson received pleasing marks of the esteem of several friends and admirers. The Leeds East Circuit Juvenile Missionary Society, under the happiest auspices, presented him with Dr Clarke's "Commentary," in six volumes quarto, handsomely bound; the Bradford Juvenile Missionary Society gave to him the Works of Arminius; while from individual brethren similar tokens of regard were tendered. In connection with Missionary Societies he had laboured for a series of years, and, as we have already seen, his services had become a desideratum in the cause of Missions; but now, more than at any previous period, the Societies looked for his co-operation and help. With Dr Clarke and Richard Watson he had been long associated in the work of the Gospel; but now that they had entered into their rest, the solicitations for his services, and the work voluntarily undertaken by him, became more numerous and oppressive. At this time a proposition was made to him which was calculated to alter materially those conditions of his daily life that had more or less prevented him from devoting constant and unremitting attention to the interests of the Church. This proposition—made by Mr Alderman Scarth, and termed the "Sheffield scheme"—had for its object the raising of a fund sufficiently large to sustain Dawson, and, at his decease, provide an annuity for his brother. By this means it was intended to enable the great Lay-Preacher to dispense with the income he derived from farming, and make him independent of secular employment; while his talents were to be consecrated entirely to the work of organising and strengthening Missionary Societies, and the general but not less important duties of a Preacher of the Gospel. The outlines of this commendable



scheme were described to him by Mr Scarth of Sheffield on the 27th December 1835, when William, with a heart full of confidence in the wisdom of his Heavenly Father, exclaimed, "Thy will be done!" Thus, with the close of the year 1835, do we find that his services were valued by the Church—that provision had been made for the unfettered continuance of his labours under more favourable auspices—that, by the interposition of a kind and gracious Providence, the aspirations contained in a hymn which was his particular favourite were likely to receive fulfilment in his own experience and history—

" Let us, in life and death,  
Thy steadfast truth declare ;  
And publish, with our latest breath,  
Thy love and guardian care."

For the purpose of giving practical effect to the scheme for William Dawson's endowment, a circular, dated Leeds, February 20, 1836, was prepared and forwarded throughout the Connexion. In it attention was called to the value of his labours to the Church, the desirability of providing a fund amounting to £4000, to be placed in the hands of the Missionary Treasurer, with the stipulation that Dawson should receive "an annuity of two hundred pounds during the term of his natural life, and at his decease an annuity of fifty pounds to his brother Thomas Dawson, who is fifty years of age, and from peculiar circumstances dependent on his brother, should he be the survivor, during the term of his natural life." This appeal was warmly received and heartily supported, and, although the sum originally contemplated was not secured, the response was so cordial and satisfactory that the Conference felt justified in guaranteeing to William an income that was considered by him to be fully sufficient for all his wants. Accordingly, the following



communication was sent to him by the Secretary of Missions :—

“LONDON, 28th September 1837.

“MY DEAR MR DAWSON,—The Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society have desired me to convey to you their decision on your letter of the 14th of August, which was laid before them yesterday, together with one on the same subject from Mr Scarth of Leeds. The Committee rightly appreciate your motives for wishing that means should be taken to increase the sum that has been raised for the purpose of securing your valuable services to the cause of Christ, without interruption or embarrassment from secular engagements ; but, on the fullest consideration, they are of opinion they cannot with propriety, for various reasons, take any step or make any appeal for that purpose. There are at present two special objects before the friends of the Society—the Stockholm Chapel and the Negro Schools—and it is not improbable that another may be presented before long. At the same time, I am directed to assure you that the Committee most cheerfully adopt the recommendation of the Conference Committee of Review. They will take the amount which has been collected, and secure to you an annuity of £150, and £30 annually to your brother, in case he should survive you. The Committee are also anxious that such arrangements should be made with you as would leave you as much as possible, consistent with the claims of the Society, at liberty to follow your own judgment and inclinations. They have therefore resolved to propose to you that for six months in the year, not continuous, but to be specified by mutual agreement, as the interests of the Society may appear to require, you shall be considered under the direction of the Society, to attend such anniversaries as they may think best, and that for the remaining months you shall be at liberty to gratify



your friends and your own kind heart by attending such other Missionary, Chapel, and School Anniversaries, &c., as you may please; and they hope the arrangement may meet your wishes. If agreeable to you, you may therefore consider yourself an annuitant of the Society from the 29th September 1837; and you will please to signify to us your acceptance of this plan, or, if any practicable modification occurs to you, you will suggest it. I am desirous to say that your valuable services have been promised to the Cornwall District. Their anniversaries are held in the end of March and beginning of April; but you shall hear further when we receive your approval of the Plan."

The foregoing letter—which we have fully transcribed for the purpose of showing his connection with the Wesleyan Missionary Society in the clearest light—was placed in his hands as Dawson was about to start upon one of his preaching journeys. After he had made himself acquainted with the contents, he committed his future to the care and guidance of the Lord, assured that He would provide for him "as seemeth good in His sight." And here be it observed, that the arrangement just described had not been sought in any way by the simple-minded farmer of Barnbow. While it is true that he "laboured more abundantly" than many of his brethren, it must not be assumed that he endeavoured to obtain any special recognition of his great labours and superior talents. On the contrary, he would have been contented and happy had he remained to the close of his earthly career in that sphere of holy duty and service for which he possessed a rare combination of special acquirements, gifts, and graces, and in which it had hitherto been considered by him his highest privilege to be usefully employed. The acceptance of the offer of a more dignified position in the Church was made from a sense of the duty



which devolved upon him to devote his powers to whatever sphere of usefulness his Master might call him, irrespective of selfish considerations or fleeting honours. He never had been dependent upon any individual, or upon any collective body of persons, for the necessities of life. His own testimony to the comfort and respectability in which his lot had been cast by a kind Providence, is as follows :—"I am as comfortable at present in my farm as I need to be. Home has many endearments. The house was built by my father ; the family have lived in it for a period of sixty years ; and I shall have to give up my Classes, to the members of which I feel strongly attached. With me it is a hard struggle. I only wish to know the will of God—that will known, I can make any sacrifice." Under such circumstances, and in such a spirit, did William Dawson become the accredited servant of the holy cause of Missions. On Monday, 23d October 1837, he wrote :—"I went to Parlington, and finally settled to give up the farm. Lord, Thy will be done !" What an exhibition of Christian discipleship and practical comment on the words, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

His assent to the resolutions of the Conference being made publicly known, applications for his services were received at the Mission House from all quarters. So numerous were these applications, that the Secretary deemed it expedient to announce the conditions upon which his services might be secured and the appointments accepted by him. He had now removed to Leeds—his household arrangements being under the care of his niece, Miss M. Dawson—and to his residence at Springfield Terrace, Burmantofts, solicitations for his co-operation in various good works were sent daily. The manner in which these requests were received may be readily surmised alike from the well-known kindness of Dawson's disposition and the sub-



joined Plan of his engagements, all of which he faithfully discharged. Passing over the intermediate period between November 1837 and June 1839—a period of his life which was characterised by incessant labour and much fruitfulness—we transcribe the following Plan of his Appointments for the information of our readers :—

1839.	Sept. 1. (Sunday) Riddings, near Belper.
July 25. Beal.	2. Critch, Derbyshire.
26. Snaith.	4. Armley, near Leeds.
28. (Sunday) Doncaster.	5. Middleton.
29. Misterton.	6. Horsley, Woodhouse.
30. Goole.	8. (Sunday) Burton-on-Trent.
31. Ancoats.	9. Tamworth, near Birmingham.
Aug. 1. Kelfield.	10. Ticknall, near Ashby.
2. Acaster.	11. Heanor, near Derby.
4. (Sunday) Leeds.	12. Ilkstone, near Nottingham.
5. Worksop.	13. Breedon, near Ashby.
6. Grundle-on-the-Hill.	15. (Sunday) Loughborough.
8. Ferry.	16. Thurmanstone.
8. Proceed to Nottingham.	17. Anisty.
9. Radcliffe, near ditto.	18. Ecton, near Northampton.
11. (Sunday) Leicester.	19. Finedon, ditto.
12. Through Coventry to St Albans.	20. Higham Ferrers.
13. St Albans.	22. (Sunday) Bedford.
14. Thrussington, near Leicester.	23. Perhaps Newport-Pagnell.
15. Broughton, ditto.	24. Aylesbury.
18. Scarborough.	25. Oakham.
19. Ditto.	26. Grimsby, Lincolnshire.
20. Ditto.	27. Ditto. ditto.
23. Chickingly, near Dewsbury.	28. Caister, ditto.
25. (Sunday) Cross Hills, near Skipton.	29. (Sunday) Scrimthorp, Lincolnshire.
26. Otley.	30. Minterton, Lincolnshire, Several engagements omitted.
27. Manchester.	Oct. 31. Set off for Birmingham.
28. Swanlow Lane, near Nantwich.	
29. Etruria, Potteries.	



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| <p>Nov. 1. Newport-Pagnell.<br/>         2. Gate, St Albans.<br/>         3. (Sunday) St Albans and Watford.<br/>         4. St Albans.<br/>         5. Watford.<br/>         6. A wish for me to preach in the neighbourhood.<br/>         7. City Road Missionary Meeting.<br/>         8. In London.<br/>         9. Go to Ipswich.<br/>         10. (Sunday) ditto.<br/>         11. Ipswich Mission. Meeting.<br/>         12. Woodbridge.<br/>         13. Manningtree.<br/>         14, 15. Unengaged.<br/>         16. Travel to Brighton.<br/>         17. (Sunday) Preach at ditto.<br/>         18. Preach at ditto.<br/>         19. Lewes.<br/>         20. Worthing.<br/>         21. Walworth.<br/>         22. In London.<br/>         23. Travel to Windsor.<br/>         24. (Sunday) Preach at ditto.<br/>         25. Meeting at ditto.<br/>         26. Maidenhead.<br/>         27. Stanhope Street.<br/>         28. Chelsea.<br/>         29, 30. Unengaged.<br/>         Dec. 1. (Sunday) City Road and Lambeth.<br/>         2. Spitalfields.<br/>         3. Westminster.<br/>         4. Southwark.<br/>         5, 6. Unengaged.<br/>         7. Go to Brentford.<br/>         8. (Sunday) Brentford.<br/>         9. Hinde Street.<br/>         10. Go to Stainford.<br/>         12. I hope to see home.</p> | <p>13. Home.<br/>         14. Set off for York.<br/>         15. (Sunday) Preach at ditto.<br/>         16. Missionary Meeting.<br/>         17. Water.<br/>         18. Acaster.<br/>         19. Foggathorpe and Holme.<br/>         20. Home.<br/>         21. Set off for Congleton.<br/>         22. (Sunday) Preach at ditto.<br/>         23. Middlewich, Cheshire.<br/>         24. Return to Bradford.<br/>         25. Bradford Juvenile Missionary Meeting.<br/>         26. Preach near Bradford.<br/>         27. Home.<br/>         28. Go to Oldham.<br/>         29. (Sunday) Preach at ditto.<br/>         30. Winsford, Cheshire.<br/>         31. Burslem.<br/>         1840.<br/>         Jan. 4. Stokesley, Cleveland.<br/>         5. Ditto.<br/>         6. Return.<br/>         This week not yet filled up.<br/>         12. (Sunday) Ripon.<br/>         15. Sheffield.<br/>         16. Ecclesfield.<br/>         19. (Sunday) Bilston.<br/>         20. Kidderminster.<br/>         21. Uttoxeter.<br/>         26. (Sunday) Rochdale.<br/>         This week not yet filled up.<br/>         Feb. 2. (Sunday) Hull.<br/>         4. Driffeld.<br/>         5. Crowle.<br/>         9. (Sunday) Derby.<br/>         10. Belper, Potteries.<br/>         11. Buxton.<br/>         16. (Sunday) Nantwich.<br/>         This week not yet filled up.<br/>         23. Near Manchester.</p> |
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In the year 1840 he visited Ireland, sailing from Liverpool on the first day of April. The sister country had many attractions for him, her scenery and her children alike winning his admiration and esteem. Everywhere during his stay the people flocked to hear him, and evinced in many ways their appreciation of his self-denying labours for their spiritual benefit, and their affection for him as a Christian and a man. Naturally there was much in the Preacher to arrest the attention of his Irish fellow-countrymen, and his visit to them was attended with the most gratifying results. On returning home he resumed his duties as a travelling advocate of Missions and Preacher of the Gospel, but old age was beginning to feel the oppression of work which would have exhausted the energies of many younger men. Opening chapels, preaching funeral sermons, conducting Sunday-school services, addressing missionary meetings, together with the fatigue caused by the excessive travelling which these various labours entailed, tended to enfeeble the powers of him whose life had been one of long and severe toil in the vineyard of the Gospel. Still, however, did he adhere resolutely to the fulfilment of his promises and the conscientious working-out of his pre-arranged Plans. This fact is abundantly evident when we find that, during his last journey but one through the Northern District, he travelled four hundred miles, and preached twenty-nine times, within a period of eighteen days. But now, as we have hinted, he experienced some difficulty in the prosecution of his work. It is true that his mental energy and spiritual power were as vigorous as in bygone days, but the wheels of life ran more slowly now, and pressed more heavily. Anxious as he was to wear an appearance of health and strength, he was sometimes forced to admit the physical weakness which prognosticated the coming separation of body and spirit. To one who had



sought his assistance at this time, he said, "You must not trust to such a broken reed as your old friend," and his consciousness of failing strength was confirmed by his medical attendant, who gave it as his opinion that if Dawson's labours were not materially lessened, fatal consequences might ensue. With a presentiment of not long-deferred dissolution, he parted, in December 1840, from the son of his friend Mr Isaac Taylor of York. "Farewell, John," he said; "this is perhaps the last time I shall see you upon earth. I have a presentiment that I shall go off suddenly, and you must not be surprised if you hear tell of my being found dead somewhere." Before the close of the same year he visited the Isle of Wight, where he was attacked by severe catarrh, and, after fulfilling some engagements in London, he returned to Leeds in a most precarious condition. The most serious apprehensions being entertained regarding his state, bleeding was resorted to, which seemed to give him considerable relief, and by careful nursing, and after one week's rest, he was greatly revived. But the end was not far distant.

At the beginning of the year 1841, he renewed his travels with some of the old ardour still untouched by the hand of time. With a Plan similar to the one we have given in the preceding pages to guide his efforts, we find him successively at Nottingham, Birmingham, Hull, Rotherham, Bristol, Bath, Northampton, and many other places, where he sought to animate the people with the holy principle of the Divine Life. His ministrations during his last visit to Societies which had been strengthened, comforted, and blessed aforetime through his instrumentality, were characterised by the same felicity of delivery, unction, and power which had distinguished the veteran Lay-Preacher when in the prime and vigour of manhood. But the measure of his days was nearly accomplished, and he felt more and more that the



account of his stewardship must soon be rendered to God. After a tour in the South of England, which ended 30th June, he returned to Leeds in much weakness and debility, and when asked by a sympathising friend as to his health, he replied, as he placed his hand over his breast, "I am not right here—my work is too hard for me." In the hope that the open air and travelling might be conducive to his recovery, yet contrary to the wishes of his friends, he rose early in the morning of Saturday the 3d July, and started, in company with his relative Mr Phillips, for Colne, in Lancashire. There he greeted his friends, and selected the hymns to be sung in the approaching Sabbath services. After having retired with his Bible for private meditation and study, he prayed with the family with whom he stayed, and afterwards sought that bodily rest he so much needed for the expected duties of the morrow. When that morrow came, he looked not upon a few hundreds of the worshippers of God on earth, but upon that mighty host which "no man can number," whose privilege and glory it is to celebrate His praise in heaven. When that morrow came, the voice of William Dawson was not heard in the humble sanctuary at Colne, but was taking part in that grand chorus of celestial voices which is unceasingly ascribing "glory to God and to the Lamb." When that morrow came, the feeble, worn-out body of a distinguished Wesleyan Lay-Preacher was cold and lifeless, but the undaunted, immortal spirit had winged its flight to the realms of everlasting day. When that morrow came, the earnest, untiring labourer had rested from his toil, and had received that gladsome welcome into a happier, brighter, and better state of being, "Well done, good and faithful servant! enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" That morrow was to him the Sabbath, not of time, but of eternity; not of earth, but of heaven; not of rest merely from daily toil, but of eternal



felicity in God. At two o'clock in the morning, the dying saint called upon Mr Phillips to awake and minister to the necessities of his last moments upon earth. The request was instantly complied with by his relative, who hastened to his side along with several members of the family, whose delight it had been to give accommodation to God's servant. A doctor was at once procured, but human skill was of no avail, for in a few minutes his pulse had ceased to beat. His last words were, "Let us in life, in death, Thy steadfast truth declare;" the remainder of his favourite verse being stifled by the grasp of the "last enemy." Thus, without a struggle, and with his latest thoughts fixed upon that glorious Gospel which it had been his delight to publish, died William Dawson, a man who had received from the Lord gifts and graces above many—a Christian who had for a period of fifty years faithfully endeavoured to use his talents for the service of Him who gave them, and the salvation of immortal souls!

The tidings of his sudden death fell like a thunderbolt among the community at Colne. As early as five o'clock in the morning many people had gathered round the door of the house for the purpose of satisfying themselves of the accuracy of what seemed to them at first to be but a vague and baseless rumour; while, as the day wore on, crowds came to testify to the depth of their sorrow, and their sincere reverence for the famous Lay-Preacher who had passed away. At the chapel, the Itinerant and Local Preachers, the Stewards, members, and friends met together for the purpose of specially improving the occasion. The great estimation in which the deceased had been held by other than those of his own Communion, was exhibited in the closing of factories, in order that the operatives might follow his remains as they were being removed from the town on the Monday after his death. In every place through which the mournful



procession passed on its journey towards Leeds, large companies of mourners congregated, and the expressions of grief were general and heartfelt. At Leeds the remains lay until Wednesday the 7th July, when the interment took place. On that day the streets of the great Yorkshire town were thronged with masses of people who desired to pay a last tribute of respect to his memory, while along the road which leads to Barwick, for at least a mile and a half, the crowd of mourners was dense and unbroken. Although the weather was rather unfavourable, multitudes followed the hearse for a considerable distance out of Leeds, and when the cortege had arrived at Barwick Church, it was found that a hundred persons on horseback, and carriages to the number of eighty-six, had joined in the funeral train. The church being soon filled to overflowing, many were compelled to stand in the churchyard during the reading of the opening portion of the Burial Service ; and although a heavy shower of rain was falling at the time, the sad congregation of mourners remained compact and undiminished until the last sod had been placed upon his grave. The service was read by the Rector in the most impressive and touching manner, and many present rejoiced in the midst of their sorrow at the well-grounded assurance that the committal to the dust of all that was mortal of William Dawson, "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life," was not a mere formality, but an act which was justified by the remembrance of his faith, his hope, his love, and his labours. He died on the 4th July 1841, in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

The name of William Dawson was dear to those who were privileged to know him personally ; it is even now, after the lapse of thirty years, a household word in the Connexion to which he belonged, and in whose service he spent the greater portion of his long and useful life. After his



burial many public marks of genuine admiration were paid in remembrance of his many virtues. A funeral sermon was preached at St Peter's, Leeds, by the Rev. R. Newton ; others were preached at Bradford, Leeds, York, and elsewhere, by the Rev. James Everett, who was a dear personal friend and the biographer of the deceased. Affectionate reference to the loss which had been occasioned to the Church, through the death of his friend, was also made by W. G. Scarth, Esq., while subscriptions were raised for the benefit of the Missionary Fund, as a memorial of him who had been so conspicuously identified with the cause. The following tribute to his worth appeared in the address of the Conference which next assembled after his death :—" Valuable members of the Connexion have likewise been removed by death, among whom we feel it right to mention the venerable William Dawson, who, after many years of useful and acceptable labours as a Local Preacher, has this year died in the Lord. Few men were ever more extensively known in the Wesleyan Connexion in Great Britain, or more highly esteemed wherever known ; it is, therefore, unnecessary that we should speak to you at any length of either his character, talents, or labours. Earnestly desirous of promoting the prosperity of the work of God, especially in its Missionary department, he devoted his very popular talents to its advocacy. His numerous sermons and addresses, delivered with all that sanctified energy which belonged to his character, were highly acceptable, and often produced the most important results. His removal was sudden, and he was engaged in his valuable labours to the last. During the brief interval which elapsed between his final seizure and death, he was enabled to express his un-failing trust in the Saviour who had died for him, and had been his guard through life. While he lived, he had always been ready to attend to the voice of Providence when it



called him to labour ; by the grace of God, he was not less ready when suddenly called to die. The calmness which he manifested on experiencing what he felt to be the stroke of death, and the holy joy with which he at once commended his spirit to his Redeemer, proved that while he had long and extensively lived what may be termed a *public life*, he had yet maintained all the *inward power* of religion, and had walked humbly with God. His happy death was a suitable close to his holy and useful life." \*

Within the period of William Dawson's life, several events of an important character transpired, some of which absorbed, in common with others, a considerable amount of his personal attention, and claimed his sympathy. He witnessed the Kilhamite agitation, the Warrenite expulsion, the discussions on the gown question, the introduction of colleges, the ordination of preachers, and other controverted points, which were at the time of grave interest to the general body of Methodists. His labours in the Gospel were contemporary with those of Benson, Clarke, and Watson, Bramwell, Pawson, Bradburn, and others who were justly regarded as being possessed of rare endowments, by all of whom he was held in the highest regard. Of the generation to which he belonged, John Batty was perhaps his sole surviving friend. In times of agitation and excitement he was as little moved by the demonstrations of the clamorous among those who differed from him, as he was influenced by the subtleties of refined logic. When engaged in labouring beside the most gifted and popular of his brethren in the Ministry, his deportment was characterised by a uniformly quiet, unobtrusive manner, and that abnegation of self which shone so conspicuously in his intercourse with the humblest of Christians. In the morning of his manhood he had given his heart to the Saviour, and dedi-

\* "Minutes of Conference," 1841, pp. 137, 138.



cated the noontide of his life to the service of God. When the shades of the evening of his earthly existence were closing around him, he was found resting with childlike confidence upon the arm of Him who had been under all circumstances the fountain of his well-being, and the great object of his desire, adoration, and love.

The personal appearance of William Dawson has been thus described by his intimate friend, the Rev. James Everett:—"It was that of a man, a man in the most manly sense of the term. He was strong of bone, muscular, well-built, well-rounded, proportionate, standing about five feet nine inches, had hair of a deep auburn, and a complexion approaching the embrowned rather than the dark. The eye, of a lightish grey with a dark pupil, was round, keen, full of fire, well set in the head, and mounted with slightly overhanging eyebrows. The face, too, was round, somewhat full; the ears small, thick, and closely attached to the head; a good mouth, with a somewhat biting expression, similar to that which is found in some of the portraits of Sir Walter Scott; and an excellent forehead, covered in later life, as was that of the Rev. Daniel Isaac, with false hair, but hair much worse in construction, ill adapted to the head, and overhanging the fine *sinciput* like an eave of thatch, an article on which the writer did not fail to rally him, though perhaps indispensable to comfort. The features might be pronounced regular but expressive, inclining to the fierce, on the eye being fixed; full of meaning, and conveying the impression of thought—that thought which is brilliant, active, penetrating, which only himself could seize, and which others could neither tame nor break, fertile in a fruitfulness which only died with himself. Three or four years prior to his death, he shrunk a little, walked with a stick, and complained of being more timid in pointing the foot at night than formerly, lest he should fall. Still his general health



was unbroken, and he soon regained more than he had lost in actual corpulence."

His manner of delivery has been described as resembling, figuratively, "the flood upon the mountains, rolling over tremendous heights, and, in proportion to the depth of its falls, again tossing its spray upward, with breaks and pauses among the rocks, then murmuring along the plainer portions of the country, and rarely ever, in its loudest roar, its boldest dashes, distracting the ear of the bystander." With all the vividness of reality would he at times depict one or other of the various scenes of bodily danger in which human beings are sometimes unfortunately to be found, and then, when the interest of his hearers had been thoroughly excited by the catastrophe or rescue being held in suspense, would he draw the parallel of souls resting in callous security upon the brink of eternal destruction. No Preacher of modern times has been more able than William Dawson to sway an audience to the mood of his own liking or loathing. His voice was usually full and sonorous, with a slight inclination to harshness in its middle tones; but when the speaker was carried along by the force of his own eloquence, his accents became shrill and piercing, and were calculated to arrest the attention and concentrate the thoughts of the most careless and indifferent among his hearers. But to the exceeding depth of his emotions, rather than to any unusual quality of voice which he possessed, may be attributed, to a large extent, the high position he attained as a natural orator. His earnestness was intense, and although one with a refined ear might have frequently disputed the correctness of his emphasis, none who listened to his thrilling warnings, his powerful denunciations, his rousing exhortations, or his tender encouragements, could for a moment call in question his sincerity, truthfulness, and love for souls. Gifted with a fertile



imagination, he was never at a loss for similitudes wherewith to enrich his discourses, and make his meaning plain to the mind even of a child. His descriptions were natural and lifelike, and produced in rapid succession, sometimes verging on the unearthly and horrible, at other times brilliant and captivating. Although he seemed occasionally to caricature an object, such a result was not occasioned by his desire to amuse his hearers, but was rather to be attributed to his impulsive zeal and the faculty he possessed of portraying a scene or describing an incident to the most minute particular. The folly and wickedness of the world were castigated by him at all seasons, and under all circumstances, with the most relentless hand. As an instance of his plain-dealing with the vices of mankind, the following is related by his biographer :—" A person of property, who lived at H——, remarkable for covetousness and oppression, ' beholding his natural face in a glass,' and feeling himself speared in the presence of the congregation, accosted Mr Dawson the next time he met him with, ' You were too personal when I last heard you ;' to which he replied, ' I candidly confess I intended it for the class of characters to which you belong, and therefore, as one of them, I embraced that opportunity of warning you of your danger.' " Upon another occasion, when engaged in conversation with a person of a selfish disposition upon the folly of penuriousness, he met with a rejoinder which would have nonplussed many less gifted with keen mother-wit than was William Dawson :—" What I give," said the person, "*is nought to onybody.*" " You are right there, friend," replied the Preacher, " for I believe you give *nothing to anybody.*" Of his power of impressing a congregation, and animating an audience with a spirit in harmony with his own, many anecdotes have been related. The following will perhaps suffice as an illustration of this feature



in his character. At Carver Street Chapel, Sheffield, in the course of one of his sermons there, he urged his hearers to give their hearts to God, and then, with a face beaming with holy trust and truth, he exclaimed, "Here's mine!" Scarcely had the echo of the words died in the building, ere from all parts of it resounded the exclamations, "Here's mine!" "Here's mine!" "Here's mine, too, Billy."—"Glory be to God!" His appeals to the consciences of men were frequently irresistible. At Irwell Street Chapel, Salford, while preaching on the subject of restitution, his words were as arrows entering the heart of one who heard him. So conscience-stricken and unhappy did the man become, that he wrote to the Preacher, and made confession of a theft he had committed, enclosing at the same time a sum of money to be devoted to any object that the latter deemed worthy of support. These incidents in the career of him whose life has been thus faintly sketched, though but a few out of many that might be cited, serve to show how that truly good and great man could adapt himself to the circumstances of the moment, and cause the passing thought to become of saving interest and account.

In the life of William Dawson we find exemplified, in a remarkable manner, the most estimable qualities which may be found in a man, as well as the higher graces which adorn a Christian. There was a beautiful consistency in all his actions, whether public or private. His honesty was of that sterling nature which attracts men and wins them to a sense of its innate value, apart from any question involving its existence as a component part of true religious principle. His candour and truthfulness were remarkable, and conspicuous to all with whom he came in contact. His zeal was daring and intrepid, sometimes hasty and impetuous, but never repulsive. His piety was deep, strong, unassailable; his faith elevated, firm, abiding. Few men would have



undertaken, voluntarily, the arduous duties which were assigned to him, or which he was prompted by his great love to accept; fewer still would have striven as he did to overtake and discharge all engagements, without a thought being directed to his own personal convenience, comfort, or worldly interests. Successive journeys, which at the time in which he lived would have appeared impracticable, if not impossible, to many, were accomplished, as we have seen, with marvellous punctuality, though at the cost of much bodily fatigue. At outdoor services, in crowded chapels, during all seasons, in every condition of society, in his public ministrations, and in his private life, William Dawson was the same persevering, energetic, industrious, self-sacrificing friend and brother in the Gospel. He did not cease to labour until the fountain of his earthly existence had ceased to play.



*SAMUEL HICK.*

FAITH is a necessary element in the constitution of society. On its presence depends, in no small measure, the temporal well-being of individuals and communities. In the genial bearing of friends, and the harmonious attitude of nations we discover reflections of its nature, operation, and results. It adjusts and embellishes social life, and ministers to the general good. In the market-place it is indispensable to business transactions ; in the private circle it is co-existent with the affability and kindness of mutual attachment ; while in the bosom of the family it is of mature growth and indigenous. The various strata of human existence are compacted by its influence, and become disintegrated only when its power has been weakened or supplanted. Such is the faith of man in his fellow, but it is widely different from the faith of the Christian in his God. Human faith is unstable and transitory ; “ saving faith ” has alike its origin and its object in Jehovah. Faith in the created springs from the creature, but faith in Him whom “ no man hath seen at any time ” is “ the gift of God.” What the fountain is to the streamlet, Christian faith is to Christian works ; and from it flows a life-giving principle which displays itself in continuous action and zeal for Christ. As the natural stream gathers volume and force in its course towards the river and the ocean, so does faith receive strength by the successive addition of virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. From faith in lively exercise, indeed,



charity cannot be dissociated. "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith, which worketh by love." These are concomitant Christian graces. In the vigour or feebleness of the one, in any individual follower of Christ, we have an index to the character of the other in the same person. While, on the one hand, faith becomes an incentive to the holiest affection, love, on the other hand, instigates her sister grace to the loftiest anticipations and to the boldest achievements. Thus it is that the greatest of the Christian graces occasionally assumes an apparently inferior position to that occupied by faith in the walk and conversation of God's children: the action and results of the latter being at all times of a more conspicuous and impressive nature than those of the former, though not more real and important as evidences of religious vitality. So much does faith at times absorb the attention and influence the conduct of many of the Lord's adopted family, that a casual observer may not be able to discover in them traces of the operation of love. Nevertheless, though her form may be hidden behind the majestic stature of the other, love is ever present where faith exists, to direct aims, to break down barriers, to sweeten labours, to lighten difficulties, to soften reverses, to soothe sorrows, and to crown with victory. Thus, in the lives of many who have devoted themselves to the work of preaching the Gospel, have the graces we have named shone like unto twin-stars in a firmament of light and truth, neither of them eclipsing the brilliancy of the other, but both shedding an equal lustre upon the pilgrim's pathway. Such was the case with him whose career forms the subject of this chapter. While his faith in God and in the efficacy, fulness, and freeness of Christ's redemption was of that invulnerable character which admits of no questioning, but stands unappalled before the fiercest onslaughts, his



love to God and to his fellow-man was deep, broad, and unquenchable. His robust and vigorous faith, even in its most daring exercises, could not conceal the features of his pure and impassioned love. On the contrary, the presence of the latter not unfrequently served to reconcile men to what would have been considered, in others, the extravagancies of presumption or the ill-directed workings of unbridled religious zeal. Thus did his burning love to sinners disarm invective when his faith seemed to overstep the bounds of propriety, in its endeavours to lead captive to the Saviour the obdurate and rebellious, the callous and indifferent, against their inclination and in opposition to their will.

Upwards of a century ago, the usual stillness of a small Yorkshire town was broken by an occurrence somewhat uncommon to the place and time. Wesleyan Methodism had not yet attained to a position of respectability in the eyes of the world, nor could it then invite the wayfarer to enter one or other of the hundreds of commodious, if not elegant, buildings which have since been erected for the purpose of gathering into congregations its thousands of adherents. Consequently, John Nelson, the fearless and successful Itinerant Preacher, had taken up a position by the Market Cross, for want of a more desirable platform from which to deliver his message of salvation. While he declared, with impassioned eloquence, the glad tidings of which he was the herald, a voice was heard in angry declamation from the outskirts of the crowd that had gathered around the speaker. Some votaries of the Papacy—conscious of the Preacher's aptitude for the work in which he was engaged, and dreading his power to alienate less devoted Romanists than themselves from their allegiance to Antichrist—had bribed a loose character of the town to smother the utterances of the Protestant evangelist with stentorian shouts and sottish



babbling. The device was successful. The assemblage dispersed before the service had been properly concluded. But a lasting impression had been made, at least upon one person present, and his life forms the subject of our attention in the following pages. It is true, indeed, that no saving influence had been exerted on the mind and heart of Samuel Hick—then a mere child—by the words which were spoken by the Preacher upon that occasion ; but the whole scene, from the opening hymn to the final triumph of the adversary, clung to the memory of the boy, and inspired him with a regard approaching to veneration for the Preacher and his work, while it no doubt prepared his understanding for the reception of the truths of that religion which was afterwards to animate his being to no common degree, to give employment to his manhood, and to crown his old age with the choicest blessings.

Samuel Hick was a native of Aberford, in Yorkshire, where he was born on the 20th September 1758. Owing to the straitened circumstances of his parents, who had to provide for the necessities of a numerous family, his education in early life scarcely went beyond the province of words of one syllable. Having attained to manhood, however, and being anxious to study the Word of God after his conversion, he applied himself to the acquisition of such a knowledge of the English language as would enable him to read the Bible in an intelligent manner. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to Mr Edward Derby, blacksmith, of Healaugh, and from that time he was able, through the kindness of his master and his own industry, to support himself without making any call upon the slender resources of his parents. It is gratifying to notice that during the early years of Samuel's apprenticeship, Mr Derby filled the place of a mentor to him, and acted as his confidential adviser in regard to certain religious difficulties which presented them-



selves at various times to the mind of the lad. Mrs Derby, too, looked upon him as one who was to her as an adopted son rather than her husband's apprentice merely, until, as time wore on, the discovery was made that her daughter had conceived an affection for Samuel. That passion was, in some measure at least, reciprocated ; but worldly pride and prejudice interposed a barrier to the union of the lovers, and, strange as it may seem, Mrs Derby took the side of her husband against the claims of him who had been to her as a son. Miss Derby eventually became the bride of another, but that espousal, which had been consummated to gratify the ambition of her parents, was neither a happy nor an abiding one. The young wife felt deeply the burden of the sacrifice which she had been called upon by filial duty to make, and the mental depression to which she gave way was ere long followed by hopeless insanity. That terrible malady held her in its grasp until death put a period to her suffering and the fitful memory of her outraged love. Many years after, when time had healed the sore caused by Samuel's disappointment, and extinguished Mrs Derby's longings after worldly success, the friendship which had blessed the youth of the former was happily renewed and sanctified by the bonds of a common faith, while to the closing day of his long and eventful life the village blacksmith was endearingly called "Our Sam" by the aged widow of his former master.

At different times during his youth, the mind of Samuel would appear to have been under the influence of a sacred reverence for Divine things. As we have already noticed, his early recollections of pious John Nelson and other Methodist Preachers who had visited the market-place of Aberford, and there unfurled the standard of the Cross, never wholly faded from his memory, but led him to be, upon many occasions and in various places, an attentive



listener to the addresses of that noble band of earnest men, who, in the early days of Wesleyanism, travelled throughout the district in which his lot was cast, seeking to bring such as were without the pale of religious influences to a knowledge of the truth as it is in a crucified Redeemer. Indeed, at one time he was so much impressed by a conviction of the genuineness of the message which had been delivered in his hearing by one of those open-air Preachers—Mr Richard Burdsall—that he followed him regularly from place to place, in order to reap as much pleasure as possible from the animated discourses which invariably fell from the lips of that talented Local Preacher. By such means an affection for Methodism, her teachers, and her doctrine, was implanted in Samuel's breast, and he was frequently found engaged in stoutly defending his friends the Preachers against the unwarrantable assaults of the worldly-minded, and the encroachments of clerical opposition. Possessed of an ardent temperament, he was *thorough-going* in everything to which he put his hand ; and whenever the sympathies of his nature were excited, they seemed to carry him involuntarily onward, and in spite of every adverse circumstance. It may be truly said of him that he was peculiarly fitted by the earnestness of his character for the great work in which he was to be engaged, that of instructing the ignorant in a knowledge of themselves, and directing the unlearned to an acquaintance with the things that pertain to eternal life.

When upon the threshold of manhood, he was privileged to hear a sermon preached by the Rev. John Wesley in the Old Chapel at Leeds. As the Preacher enforced the doctrine taught in the words of St James, "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works," what was then to him a new phase of Christian experience and practice was unfolded to his deeply anxious and inquiring mind. For some time previous to his first



attendance upon the ministration of the great Father of Methodism, and ere he had listened to Wesley's vigorous reasoning and powerful appeals, Samuel had given an intellectual assent to the truths of revelation. But this was to be attributed more to the fact that the *messengers* appeared to him to be guided by a spirit of veracity, than by reason of the message itself having been brought home to his own heart, and its truthfulness corroborated by an examination of his own thoughts, and feelings, and actions. Now, however, a light suddenly broke upon the natural darkness of his inner man : revealing in an experimental manner the deceitfulness and heinousness of sin, and the spiritual destitution of those who are still in a state of nature. A new era in his life had been inaugurated. The work of his conversion, however, was completed at another time, and by an extraordinary agency.

Throughout his prolonged and honoured career as a Christian and Lay-Preacher of the Gospel, Samuel Hick took the greatest delight in contemplating the providential dealings of God with His children ; and he often meditated, with gratitude in his heart, upon the thought that the goodness of his Creator had been especially manifested towards himself in his having been led to espouse a wife who was in every respect suited to his disposition, pursuits, and station in life. "The Lord gave me a good wife," he feelingly remarked at one time, after having looked back upon "all the way that the Lord had led him." Through his marriage a connection was formed which had for its fruit his being brought into the glorious liberty of the Gospel. For some time after their union Samuel and his wife were "without hope," being "without God ;" but they were continually remembered at a throne of grace by the God-fearing mother of Mrs Hick. Herself a member of the Wesleyan Connexion, she never allowed a seasonable



opportunity to pass without exhorting her son-in-law to choose whom he would serve. To all human appearance, however, her counsel, warnings, example, and prayers were in vain. But what the Christian mother could not accomplish during her lifetime, as a humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, was happily effected through the means of her triumphant death. The tears and entreaties of her life had no power with him for whom her soul travailed, but the joyful expectation which lit up the countenance of the dying saint at the approach of the "king of terrors," impressed Samuel's heart with a consciousness of the reality of a future state of existence, reawakened anxieties which had for a time been soothed and quieted by the unsatisfying pleasures of the world, and awakened within him a concern for the interests of his immortal soul. That quickening influence which had been exerted upon him culminated in the attainment and lifelong possession of a peace which the world could not bestow. Three days after her decease, Samuel dreamed that his mother-in-law stood beside him clothed in white apparel, and taking him by the hand, warned him to repent and "flee from the wrath to come," otherwise he could not expect to meet her beyond the grave. He awoke in terror, and groaning under a deep sense of the intolerable burden of unforgiven sin, called earnestly upon God to pardon his past transgressions, and to grant him grace for every future time of need. His wife, being aroused from her slumbers by the unusual sound of prayer in the dead of night, and fearful that her husband might have been seized by bodily illness, proceeded to call some neighbours to her assistance. Ere her mission had been completed, however, she was arrested by the voice of the soul-awakened suppliant, who knelt on the flagged floor of the humble apartment, surrounded by spiritual as well as by natural darkness. "I want Jesus,"



he exclaimed from the depth of his agonised spirit—"Jesus, to pardon all my sins." His prayer was answered. The Sun of Righteousness appeared with healing in His beams. The Saviour manifested Himself as an all-sufficient, loving, and precious Deliverer from a worse than Egyptian bondage; while Samuel gladly accepted Him as his Almighty Surety, and embraced Him as his gracious Friend. The subsequent pious, devoted, and useful character and conduct of the village blacksmith were unquestionable evidences that he had "passed from death unto life," that his conversion, though sudden, and brought about by what some might be pleased to consider as means of a doubtful, because supernatural, character, was certainly real, thorough, and enduring.

As a babe in grace, Samuel received his first spiritual food at the hands of a clergyman of the Established Church—probably Mr Wightman, Curate of Ledsham. On the removal of that gentleman from the district, Samuel was induced to attach himself to the Wesleyan Society at Sturton Grange, as there was no Society of Methodists at Micklegate, where he resided. By one of his energetic nature, however, such a state of matters could not be allowed to be of long continuance. Accordingly, we find him, immediately after having received pardon himself, endeavouring to bring others into the pathway of life. In all seasons did he seek, by warning and exhortation, as well as by the quiet but eloquent voice of a holy walk and conversation, to bring his neighbours, his friends, and all with whom he came into contact, to the feet of the Saviour. Nor did he labour in vain. To him "old things had passed away; behold, all things had become new!" But in no particular, perhaps, was this change more apparent than in his bearing towards those by whom he was more immediately surrounded. The village smithy—usually



a haunt for the idle gossip or newsmonger—became, in his hands, a temple where the God of Israel was sought to be glorified in the conversion of sinners. It is true, indeed, that in the early days of Samuel's pilgrimage Zionward he fell into the mistake common to those who have just put on the Christian armour, and imagined that all whom he addressed on the subject dearest to his own heart must feel as he himself had felt, and would be driven, as it were, by an uncontrollable impulse to accept Christ as He is freely offered in the Gospel. But rebuffs, disappointments, and apparently fruitless labours, did not abate his zeal for God, or quench his burning love for perishing souls. "I thought," he remarked upon one occasion, when detailing his early experiences, "I could make all the world believe, when daylight appeared. I went to my neighbours, for I loved my neighbour as myself. I wished them all to experience what I felt. The first that I went to was a landlady. I told her what the Lord had done for *me*; and that what He had done for me He could do for *her*, exhorting her to pray and believe. 'What!' she exclaimed, 'have you become a *Methodist*? You were a good neighbour and a good man before; and why change? The Methodists are a set of rogues, and you will soon be like them.' " Undismayed by the taunt of the offended innkeeper, Samuel continued to impress upon her the necessity and value of personal religion, until, wearied by his importunities, she became angry, and ordered him to leave her presence. With a heart free from any feeling of bitterness on account of the unfavourable reception he had met with, he left the village inn, and retired to the corner of a field, where, actuated by the sublime thought that what God had done for himself He could as readily do for others, he poured forth earnest supplications to the great Giver of all good, that He might, in infinite mercy, condescend to pity and forgive



her who had so ruthlessly repulsed his endeavours to lead her into the way of truth. "To my surprise," Samuel continued, "when I went back, she was crying at the doorstead. She asked me to forgive her. 'Oh yes, that I will,' I said; 'and if you will let me go in and pray with you, the Lord will forgive you too.'" This request was now cordially granted. "She took me into a room," he said, in continuation of his simple narrative of an event which incited him to redoubled zeal in his Master's service, "and there I prayed for her. It was not long before the Lord blessed her; and He thus gave me the first soul I asked for. He can do a great work in a little time. She lived and died happy. This encouraged me to go on in the duty of prayer."

Owing in a great measure to the unwearied efforts of the village blacksmith, a Wesleyan Society was formed at Micklefield in the year 1785. Even the want of a regular place for worship was met through the conversion of Mr Rhodes, a farmer in the neighbourhood; for that gentleman was ever ready to give up to the use of the Society one of the rooms in his farmhouse, or, upon occasions when the congregation of his fellow-worshippers was unusually large, one of his spacious barns. But Mr Rhodes was not the only farmer of that district who provided accommodation for the purpose of gathering together the Wesleyan Methodists, as a worshipping assembly of God's people, in those early days of the Connexion's history. We find that prayer-meetings were held every Sunday morning and Monday evening, about that time, in a barn which belonged to Mr Wade, at Sturton, near the Roman Road leading from Castleford to Aberford. Those meetings were instrumental in "bringing many from darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto the living God." Of the results of a revival which took place at



Sturton Grange, in connection with these farmhouse conventicles, Samuel observes, "Some hundreds of souls were converted to God, and many were sanctified. I was one of the happy number, not only convinced of the necessity of Christian holiness, but who,—blessed be the Lord!—proved for myself that the blood of Christ cleanseth from sin." Previous to this special awakening he had occasionally engaged in exhortation, but the great spiritual good that was accomplished through those meetings led Samuel to take a part in leading similar services, more regularly and more frequently than he had hitherto done. For the purpose of extending the labours of those who had been engaged in conducting truly revival services, a Plan of appointments—embracing Garforth, Barwick, Kippax, and Micklefield, together with other places in the vicinity—was drawn up, containing the name of Samuel Hick. In this way did he become more generally known ; while such was the esteem in which he was held by the people, that his name appeared not only on the Selby Plan when Micklefield was taken into that Circuit, but was also continued on the Plan of the Pontefract Circuit, where he had laboured with great acceptance.

The office of Local Preacher was, in his estimation, the most honourable and onerous to which a man could aspire. Towards such a position in his Church his fondest hopes had been directed. For the proper discharge of the duties of such a sphere of labour, he had, by much careful reading and constant prayer, endeavoured to qualify himself. And now that his services were acceptable to the people, and sanctioned by the officials of the Connexion, he applied himself with, if possible, greater zest to the work of winning souls to Christ. Moreover, a prognostication which he had received of his being called to the work of the Lay-Ministry was likely to receive fulfilment. Soon after his conversion,



he dreamt that he had sailed to the West Indies as a Missionary—that on landing he saw a pulpit which he ascended and occupied—and that upon opening the Bible, which lay ready to his hand, he could not discover any printed characters therein. At this he was astonished, and exclaimed in his dream, “A pretty thing this!—a Bible, and not a text in it.” As he turned over the leaves, however, these words were presented to his wondering view, as though printed in letters of gold—“Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” Adopting them for his text, he commenced to preach, and as he ministered the Word, a woman was seized by conviction and cried out for mercy. Samuel then (as it appeared to him) left the pulpit, and joined with the penitent sinner in earnest supplication for pardon, until God in His goodness gave peace to her soul. Awakened from the dream, which he regarded as a message from the Almighty, he said to his wife, “Matty, I believe I am called to preach the Gospel.” Whether he was right in so receiving it, or whether “the vision of the night” was but the offspring of his own intense desires, is of little consequence, when the incident is read in the light of his after career.

At this early period of the history of Methodism, the Circuits embraced a wide tract of country—the preaching-places being almost more numerous than the Preachers. Besides, other circumstances contributed to render the duties of a Preacher incessant and laborious, not the least of these springing from intolerance and persecution. But Samuel’s love for Christ was unquenchable, and his Christian zeal of such a character as to enable him to exceed the ordinary limits of travel, toil, and fatigue; while he derived a considerable amount of pleasure from even the hardest labours to which he voluntarily devoted himself. Referring to those times, he remarks, “In those days there were not many



noble, not many rich, called. For my own part, I have travelled many scores of miles, and neither tasted meat nor drink till I got home in the evening. I have very often had snowballs thrown at me, and been abused by the enemies of the Cross of Christ. I have been turned out of places where I have been preaching, by the clergy and the magistrates; but, bless the Lord! I have lived to see better days." His impetuous spirit and herculean powers of endurance were not only manifested in the great fatigue to which he submitted his body while undertaking long and trying journeys, but also in the manner of his daily life, and in the character and style of his preaching. He was earnest in all that he did, all that he said, all that he endured. Belief was to him a sacred principle, which affected his entire being. Duty was to him a claim put forth by holy affection, to which he could not give too assiduous attention. Life, with all its blessings, was to him an important trust, of which he must render an account as a faithful steward.

The physique of Samuel Hick was peculiar and unprepossessing. He was about six feet in height, strong and bony; and his daily labour at the anvil had given an elevation to one of his shoulders, both which were round and stooping in their appearance. His features were small and slightly oval in form, but animated and expressive in character, being lit up, in his moments of anxiety or thoughtful energy, by a sparkling bluish-grey eye, which seemed to reflect what was passing in the mind of its owner. His manner was ungainly; his gait resembled his movements while at work in the smithy. Altogether his outward man was not suggestive of the spiritual power which he was enabled to wield in the work of the Gospel. But the roughness of his exterior was soon overlooked or forgotten, as his audience beheld alternately his smiles and tears, and listened to his earnest exhortations, solemn warnings, or loving counsels. He



could not, it is true, arrange neatly his discourses, or pursue for any lengthened time a consecutive chain of thought ; neither could he convince the understanding of his hearers by the intrinsic weight of his arguments. But he could do better than all these by his ability to exhibit Christ in much of His loveliness, suitableness, and all-sufficiency, to the mental view of his fellow-men. His sermons, as a rule, bore the mark of his own ripe and tried experience, but could not be considered as learned expositions of the Word of God, in the generally received acceptation of the term. His eloquence was that of the heart, rather than that of the tongue. Over his hearers, however, he exerted, invariably, a powerful influence for good. Sorrow on account of sin, or joy under a sense of the Divine favour, were the usual concomitants of his pulpit endeavours ; while much of his usefulness might be attributed to the power of his individual example, and the strength of his own Christian graces. Having himself experienced the efficacy of the Saviour's blood and righteousness, he recommended Christ to others with all the force of his own ardent nature, and with all the love of his warm sympathetic heart. Wherever he was, and by whatever circumstances surrounded, he steadfastly maintained the dignity and purity of his Christian character, regardless of consequences. The following incidents illustrate some of the leading traits in his bearing towards others.

Heated by the chase one day, and much annoyed on account of his being obliged to retire from following the hounds, his horse having dropped a shoe, a neighbouring squire brought the animal he rode to Samuel, for the purpose of being shod. Irritated by the thought that on the previous day another blacksmith had operated upon the hoofs of his hunter in perhaps too careless a manner, and thus spoiled his anticipated sport, the squire began to



swear at the negligence of Samuel's fellow-craftsman. Unabashed by the elevated rank of his customer, Samuel thus addressed him, "I pay the rent of this shop, sir; and, while it is in my hands, I will not suffer any man within its walls to take the name of God in vain. Unless you desist from your swearing, I will not shoe your horse." While it is gratifying to notice the blacksmith's jealousy for the honour of God, it is also satisfactory to be able to add, that the squire took the reproof in good part, and that he parted from the honest, straightforward Christian in a friendly manner.

To the charge of Ledsham a young clergyman had been appointed who censured religious enthusiasm, and scrupled not to assert that there had not been any inspiration by the Holy Spirit since the days of the apostles. Such a doctrine was new to the people over whom the young man had been set as their overseer in spiritual matters, and they naturally resented teaching which they believed to be contrary to the Word of God, as well as antagonistic to the belief of such eminent Christians as the Lady Betty Hastings and the Rev. Walter Sellon, both of whom had formerly lived and laboured amongst them. Getting more and more dissatisfied with their pastor, Samuel was requested to preach to them, and he readily consented to do so. After much difficulty, one of the villager's rooms was obtained, in which it was intended to hold Methodist services. On the occasion of the first meeting for this purpose, however, the clergyman appeared at the door of the cottage where the congregation had assembled, and forbade its continuance. Addressing Samuel, the clergyman said, "We want none of your preaching here, and are resolved not to have it." "Sir," replied Samuel, "I preached the Gospel here before you were born, and I will live to preach it when you are gone." "I tell you,"



retorted the clergyman, "I will not suffer you to preach here. This house is my property." "Why, sir," said Samuel, "you do not preach the Gospel to the people ; for you deny inspiration, and no man can preach it but by inspiration of the Spirit of God." "I discharge you from preaching in this house," said the reverend gentleman warmly, and in a tone of official authority, as he proceeded to leave a scene which had been unfortunately darkened by his presence. Lest the tenant of the cottage should suffer at the hands of the clergyman, who was landlord of the property, Samuel at once brought the service to a close, but sent a written protest to the reverend gentleman in the following terms. Upon the ensuing Sabbath, Samuel purposed to preach from his own cart on a waste piece of ground over which the parson had no control, and he invited his opponent to attend the said service for the purpose of correcting, if need be, anything which might be said contrary to the teaching of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. When the next Lord's Day arrived, the Blacksmith Preacher and four of his Local Brethren appeared at the place named, and mounted Samuel's cart, while the people flocked from various parts, some for the purpose of hearing the Gospel, and others, no doubt, enticed thither out of curiosity to learn the issue of Samuel's contest with the clergyman. The latter gentleman and his lady stood at a distance from the gathering and watched the proceedings. After a very successful service, the people, at Samuel's request, went direct to church, and filled the sacred edifice to overflowing. After the sermon, the clergyman desired the churchwarden to acquaint Samuel with the fact that he was willing to allow him to preach at any time in the village as he wished. But, strange to say, he who had so bitterly opposed an old and faithful servant of God in the performance of a public duty, went to London



on the following morning, and did not return until his dead body was brought back for interment, some six months after the incidents just recorded.

Samuel's high sense of rectitude, and keen sensitiveness to the claims of religion, were conspicuous traits in his character. But the manifestation of these commendable phases in his disposition was sometimes attended by circumstances of a ludicrous description. On the occasion of a hunting-meet in the neighbourhood, several gentlemen assembled near to Samuel's smithy, and among the number were three clergymen and a doctor of medicine. Seized with a sudden idea, and acting upon it without premeditation, the village blacksmith threw down his hammer and tongs and accosted the company of sportsman. "Gentleman," said he, "this is one of the finest hunts in the district. You are favoured with two particular privileges, and they are privileges which other districts have not." Such a statement, coming from one so much beneath them in social position, and who was not regarded as an authority upon matters connected with field-sports, naturally excited the curiosity of the gentlemen, several of whom requested an explanation. "Well," said Samuel, "if any of you should happen to get unsaddled and get a fall, you have a doctor to bleed you, and three parsons to pray for you; and what are these but privileges? Three parsons! Oh yes, there they are." While his wit was thus employed for the purpose of directing attention to the incompatibility of members of the sacred profession appearing in such company and for such a purpose as then engaged their attention, it was calculated to excite mirth rather than to evoke feelings of sorrow for having in any way brought contempt upon the holy office of the Gospel Ministry. But such was the impulsive nature of his efforts to do good, that Samuel rarely stayed to consider either the expediency or propriety



of the manner in which his efforts were directed for the attainment of the end he had in view.

Meeting one day a miserly person, with whom he was casually acquainted, Samuel addressed the man on the subject of Missions, and earnestly begged for a subscription. His appeal was met by excuses on the ground of poverty and want of interest in the subject. On being further pressed, the man was about to give an unqualified refusal, but Samuel had at once recourse to an expedient which had never failed him when difficulties met him by the way. Dropping upon his knees, he besought God to soften the man's heart, and to give him a spirit of liberality towards the cause of the Gospel. This mode of pleading was intolerable to the miser, who began to tremble at the thought that he was being brought, by Samuel's prayer, into the immediate presence of the Almighty, and might suddenly be called to judgment on account of his avarice and duplicity. At last, unable longer to withstand the petition of which he was the subject, the man exclaimed in a tone of consternation, "Sam, I'll give thee a guinea if thou wilt give over." This only added, as it were, fuel to the fire that burned in Samuel's breast ; for he immediately addressed the Supreme Being on the smallness of the sum which had been offered to such an important scheme as the salvation of the heathen—acknowledged that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof"—and used such arguments in his supplication as tended to support the position that man owes everything he possesses to the kindness and generosity of his Maker. Like the unjust judge who was wearied by the importunities of the poor widow, the miser fretted over the simple-hearted man of God who knelt beside him, until the words were wrung with energy from his very soul, "Sam, I tell thee to give over ; I'll give thee two guineas, if thou wilt only give it up." Samuel then



rose from his knees and received the sum promised, which he carried with exultation to a Missionary Meeting then assembled, where he rehearsed an account of his latest experience of the efficacy of prayer, with childlike simplicity and gratitude. These incidents, with others of a similar character that might be cited, serve to show the strength of his religious principles, his powers of apt and ready expression, and his high regard for the interests and extension of the kingdom of Christ.

When Methodism required of him hard labour and devoted self-sacrifice, Samuel Hick was her willing and faithful servant. By the consistent tenor of his life, and by the persevering, conscientious manner in which he discharged all duties which were assigned to him, he had qualified himself for further and more extended opportunities and spheres of usefulness. Nor was the Church slow to recognise his eminent piety and great ability. The Circuit to which he belonged was in debt, and the arrears gave much anxious concern to the Stewards. With a view to the removal of this embarrassment, a committee was formed, and Samuel was appointed, after due consideration, to visit the several places in the Circuit for the purpose of inciting the people to make special efforts for the extinction of the debt. With eager readiness Samuel accepted the duty which had been delegated to him, and entered upon the work. "I had," he says, "a very good time in going round the Circuit—had very kind friends—preached and prayed—and got seventy pounds towards the debt. While employed in this noble work, I got my own soul blest, and I grew like a willow by the waterside. I got many a wet shirt and many a warm heart; and while I was begging for money, I did not forget to pray for the souls of my fellow-creatures." But his fidelity was not to be estimated by the length of his journeys, the number of his sermons, the



earnestness of his prayers, or the amount of money he collected for the cause of Christ. By the deprivations to which he submitted for the purpose of making others happy, we are led to form a true opinion regarding the genuineness of the religion that he reflected in his daily life. Take the following in illustration. An aged widow whom he visited one day was very poor. After praying with her, and uttering a few words of consolation and encouragement, he placed sixpence in her hand. This act of kindness was acknowledged by the indigent woman with such expressions of deep-felt gratitude, that Samuel was impressed with the conviction that it was his duty to make still further sacrifices for the happiness of those who were less favoured, in a worldly sense, than himself. "Bless me!" he ejaculated, "can sixpence make a poor creature happy? How many sixpences have I spent on this mouth of mine in feeding it with tobacco! I will never take another pipe while I live. I will give to the poor whatever I save from it." A resolution which he strictly carried out to the close of his life. But this sudden cessation from the practice of smoking was attended by somewhat disagreeable consequences, as his health became thereby affected, and he was obliged to call in the services of a doctor, who, as soon as he had examined his patient, and had learned the fact of his self-denial, said, "You must resume the use of the pipe, Mr Hick." "Never more, sir, while I live," was the reply. The doctor remonstrated. "It is essential to your restoration to health, and I cannot be answerable for consequences should you reject the advice given." "Let come what will," Samuel rejoined, "I'll never take another pipe. I've told my Lord so, and I'll abide by it." "You will, in all probability, die then," said the medical man. "Glory be to God for that!" replied Samuel in a tone of exultation; "I shall go to heaven. I have made a vow, and I'll keep it."



His charity was not the mere offspring of sentiment and impulsiveness, but was generated by an ardent, overflowing love to Christ and His people, and formed a consonant part of that "true religion and undefiled" which he professed. Indeed, it may be said with truth that his whole life after conversion was a practical comment on the words, "Charity suffereth long and is kind." A load of coals, which was about to be delivered one day for his own use, was given by him to a person who had no fire in the house, and was otherwise in distressed circumstances. To relieve the wants of another poverty-stricken fellow-mortal he begged of his friends, until the basket he carried was heaped with bread, meat, butter, and other necessities of life, which, with about thirty shillings he had also collected (including half-a-crown from his wife, Matty), were as plenty in the day of want. Upon another occasion, the larder of his house, with its milk and butter, bread and cheese, meat and beer, was placed at the disposal of a regiment of soldiers, who, hungry, weary, and footsore, marched past his door while on their way to the seat of war in Flanders. Many a one in temporal as well as spiritual destitution regarded him as an angel-visitor to their cheerless homes. Many a distressed traveller was assisted on his journey along the great North road, which stretches from London to Edinburgh, through the kindness of the Christian blacksmith, whose smithy stood by the side of the highway. Many families in a state of privation were aided and comforted by his direct and considerate bounty. "If ever," observes Mr Dawson, "a person answered the character of the liberal man who devises liberal things, Samuel Hick was that man." The greatest luxury that he could enjoy was to give bread to the hungry, to comfort the disconsolate, to clothe the naked, and to satisfy the afflicted soul. It was his delight to realise the full force



and meaning of the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

In various aspects the character of the Blacksmith Preacher is a most pleasing and exemplary one. His simplicity of heart and mind, his disinterested labours for the good of others, his sympathy with suffering humanity, conjoined to the genuine godliness of his unassuming yet industrious life, elevated him in the scale of moral being, and rendered him a model of Christian worth. Yea, more, there is a standpoint from which we are enabled to view him as a man of prayer, receiving the highest favours that a mortal may enjoy. We behold him rising superior to his laborious avocation, the humble circumstances of his birth, and the frailties of his nature, and while pleading with the Maker of the Universe, the Father of Spirits, prevailing as a prince with God. In modern times, perhaps no person was ever more solicitous to do the will of Christ than was the subject of this sketch, and no one's faith was more signally honoured by Divine communications than his. Two instances of remarkable answers to his believing prayer have been furnished to us. They are as follows. The evils of an excessive drought had been felt, during a whole summer, throughout the country. The face of the ground was covered with fissures—the grain and green crops had little or no root in the earth—many cattle died—while Samuel Hick and other good men mourned over the state of the land "before the Lord." Paying a visit to Knaresborough, he preached there on the Sabbath-day, and prayed particularly for rain to gladden the face of the earth. The petition was opportune and necessary at the time, and many uttered a fervent "Amen" when it had been concluded. But there were few persons in the congregation that would have received an immediate answer to the prayer otherwise than with surprise, although many



had joined in the audible response. What inconsistency ! Samuel, however, rested on the promise of his Saviour, "According to your faith it shall be done unto you." But the Sabbath ended without a sign being visible in the sky. Monday morning dawned, and still the heavens were cloudless. Look in what direction he might, the cerulean expanse above him was undimmed by gathering vapours. Restless and uneasy, Samuel continued to pass into and out of the house, ever and anon looking towards the firmament for an answer to the prayer he had offered, until the members of the family became anxious about the state of his mind. Their solicitude for his welfare having at length caused them to question him regarding the cause of his uneasiness, Samuel replied, "Bless you, *barns*, do you not recollect that I was praying for rain last night in the pulpit? and what will the infidels at Knaresborough think if it do not come—if my Lord should fail me and not stand by me? But it must have time; it cannot be here yet; it has to come from the sea. Neither can it be seen at first: the prophet's servant only saw a bit of a cloud like a man's hand, and by and by it spread along the sky. I am looking for an answer to my prayer—but it must have time." Nor did he look in vain. The day is passing, but the promise is sure. Ere the sun has sunk beneath the western hills a cloud is seen in the heavens—the harbinger of God's answer to believing prayer. And as the darkness gathers around the stalwart form of him who stood waiting for God's message of kindness to the longing earth and the trustful spirit of His saint, the rain descends in a copious shower of blessing. Reader, imagine the scene, and be encouraged by the lesson it conveys. He who had waited patiently upon Jehovah in earnest supplication for a temporal mercy, entered the house to praise Him for His goodness in bestowing it. For, with a heart full of grati-



tude, and animated by the tenderest emotions, Samuel gathered around him the family with whom he sojourned, and sang his favourite hymn to the praise of a prayer-hearing, prayer-answering God :—

“ Happy the man whose hopes rely  
On Israel's God. He made the sky,  
And earth, and seas, with all their train.  
His truth for ever stands secure ;  
He saves th' opprest ; He feeds the poor ;  
And none shall find His promise vain ! ”

In that incident in the Christian experience of Samuel Hick, we have a beautiful illustration of the truths that faith honours God, and that God honours faith. But it was not an isolated case in the life of the village blacksmith. He breathed continually the atmosphere of prayer. His intercourse with Jehovah was at all times open, free, and uninterrupted. Much in the presence-chamber of the King of kings, he basked in His smiles, obtained the objects for which he petitioned, and rejoiced in the light of the Divine countenance. In the year 1817, he preached upon one occasion at Knottingley, near Ferrybridge, and advertised a Love-feast to be held on a certain day at Micklefield. Towards the provision of the Love-feast, he offered to supply three bushels of corn (which were all that remained from his produce of the previous year), and earnestly entreated the people to be in attendance. When this announcement and invitation were made, however, he had not calculated upon any contingency arising to frustrate his plans and cause disappointment to his friends. He doubtless felt that as it was for the glory of God that the Feast was intended, there could not be any reasonable uncertainty as to its taking place. But as the day approached, difficulties of a grave character appeared. The corn was ready to be ground, but there was not a breath of air by which the



sails of the flour-mill might be turned ; nor had there been anything but a stagnant stillness in the atmosphere for some time previous. Indeed, many persons had been anxiously waiting during several days for an opportunity to grind their corn, but the wind came not to gratify their desires. Under such trying circumstances, Samuel's faith was again to be tested and proved. Carrying his sacks of grain to the mill, he laid them down and desired the miller to unfurl his sails. "Nay," said the miller, "that will serve no purpose, for there is no wind." Samuel urgently begged of him to comply with his request, adding, "I will go and pray while you spread the cloth." His pressing solicitation was complied with ; and no sooner were the sails of the windmill adjusted, than they were wafted round by a breeze which had then began to blow, the machinery, was set in motion, the corn was converted into meal, and the man of prayer returned to his home rejoicing, and bearing with him the spoils of his faith. Another person, seeing the mill at work, took his corn to be ground ; but ere it was placed in the hopper, the breeze had subsided, and the miller observed to him, "You must send for Sammy Hick to pray for the wind to blow again." Have we not here an instance of the gracious condescension and loving-kindness of the Almighty towards His believing children ? Here we find a worm of the dust pleading successfully with Deity—a child of humanity prevailing with the Most High—the word of faith moving one of the mightiest powers of the universe !

Samuel was essentially a man of faith and prayer. Were it necessary to adduce further proof of this than what we have already given, we might easily exceed the prescribed limits of this sketch by recording numerous instances in which his faith shone conspicuously, or his supplications at a throne of grace received immediate and abundant



recognition and reward. But enough has been written, we think, to show that the subject of this chapter was not an ordinary man or an average Christian. In a degree seldom attained by the followers of Christ, he beheld with the eye of faith "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." With the ear of faith he listened for the sound of a "still, small voice," and with all the childlike simplicity of him who said, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." With the heart of faith he appropriated to himself the benefits and blessings of the atonement. With the hand of faith he presented for acceptance by his fellow-men the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of the Saviour. With the tongue of faith he proclaimed "salvation from the Lord." All his powers were employed as "members of righteousness unto holiness," and the end thereof was unto him everlasting life. He had not merely the name of a disciple: his whole life was a continuous act of devoted service. In him faith and works were as twin-sisters, mutually dependent upon each other, and inseparable companions. Living himself in the habitual exercise of a holy trust in God, he could describe precisely and clearly the nature and evidences of saving faith in others. Take the following as an illustration. Addressing a congregation, he said, "If any of you had a sum of money left to you by a friend, you would put in your claim and prove the will. Jesus Christ has made His will, and His will is your sanctification. You may put in your claim for the blessing by simple faith. The property belongs to every believer. Our Lord made a just will. He left all His children share and share alike—the youngest the same blessing as the oldest. The weakest believer that hangs upon him may have it. It is faith that lays claim to it. Faith says, 'It is my property!' Faith has two hands. It takes hold of the blessing with the one, and continues to





The Blacksmiths Shop, Micklefield



The Flour Mill near Aberford







hold it fast by the other. Stretch out the hand of faith then. Take the property your dear Lord has purchased for you and for all believers."

Gifted with such powers, it is no matter for surprise that his labours tended to the edification of Christians and the conversion of the ungodly. He needed not to say, "Do as I say, and not as I do," for in his life there was an embodiment of the doctrines which he preached. He prayerfully sought an "unction from the Holy One" to bless his ministrations in the Gospel, and his words were accompanied by demonstration of the Spirit, and were with power. For this reason, more than for any other, his help was eagerly sought by his brethren in various places, besides those in his own Circuit or neighbourhood ; until upon many week-day evenings, as well as upon every Sabbath, he was employed in the glorious work of preaching salvation by Christ. Nor did he grow weary in well-doing. From the date of his conversion to the year 1825, he had been "sowing beside all waters," labouring in season and out of season ; and now, when in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and time had made its mark upon him, did he give himself unreservedly to the work of the Gospel. Accordingly, we find him, about the beginning of the year 1826, declining business and placing his services at the call of those who needed them most. Immediately upon this resolution becoming known, invitations flowed in from all parts to him, and until the close of his life he was never left unemployed. In the Adingham, Burnley, and Skipton Circuits, he laboured for a somewhat lengthened period, and then returned home. After a short stay in the bosom of his family, he sallied forth on a mission of love, directing his steps to Rochdale, and from thence to Bolton, Clitheroe, Colne, Grassington, Burnley, Padsham, Bacup, Rossendale, Bury, and many other adjoining places. In the same year and the following, we



find him also preaching at Wakefield, Horton, Stamford Bridge, and other towns and villages in the York Circuit ; at all of which he laboured not in vain. About the middle of the year 1827, prompted by paternal affection and solicitude, Samuel paid a visit to the Metropolis. His first entry into London was on the occasion of the General Annual Wesleyan Missionary Meeting, held in May 1819; when, during a sojourn of one month's duration, he preached with much acceptance in Southwark and Hinde Street Chapels. On the first occasion of his preaching to a London congregation (in Southwark Chapel), he took for his text the words in the Epistle of James, 1st chapter, 27th verse :—" Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." After the service a gentleman addressed him in a kindly manner and in the following terms :—" My good old Yorkshireman, though I could not understand the whole of your language, part of which might have been Danish for anything I knew to the contrary, yet I have had my soul blessed under your sermon." To which welcome greeting Samuel replied, "It makes no matter, sir, what the language is, if the soul only gets blessed." Before he had left the vestry, a lady also desired to see him, when she described the serious convictions under which she had laboured during his sermon. "It is the work of the Spirit of God," said Samuel to her, "and we will return the Lord thanks for it." In his simple account of the circumstance, he observes, "Though she was dressed in fine silks, which crackled again, she knelt down on the vestry floor, and, while pleading, the Lord blessed her soul."

His second visit to the great city was not only of longer duration, but was marked by labours on a larger scale, and by results of a more important character. Although he had taken his journey with a view to the comfort and edification



of his daughter, Mrs Wrathall, then afflicted with an illness which terminated in death, Samuel did not confine his ministrations to the limited sphere of her sick-room, but went abroad for the purpose of leading strangers to the feet of the Saviour. Frequently was he to be found at the City Road, Southwark, or one or other of the Metropolitan Chapels, as early as six o'clock in the morning, either preaching, leading a Love-feast, or conducting a Prayer-meeting. These early morning labours not unfrequently resulted in the conversion of souls, and were supplemented during the day by visits to the sick, or by giving counsel to penitents, and in the evening by other religious services. It will thus be seen that his time when in London was fully occupied in the work of his Master. For the purpose of bringing people within the sound of the Gospel, he had very often recourse to the expedient of preaching in the open air, when he was sometimes treated with respect and consideration, at other times with ridicule and opposition. In addition to these methods of doing good, Samuel busied himself in making collections for chapels and schools, in praying with seamen on their respective ships, and in seizing every available opportunity for serving Christ. Ever vivacious, and occasionally humorous, his addresses were invariably conducive to spirituality of mind and a holier life in those who listened to them. At a Missionary Meeting held at Chelsea, his speech created the most marked approbation, and gave much pleasure to a large auditory. He was honoured by being provided with the Plan of the Rev. Richard Reece, who was then at Conference, and desired to have Samuel as a substitute. But in the multitude of his public engagements, and in the favour he experienced from the brethren in London, the Yorkshire Local Preacher did not overlook the primary object of his visit. Whilst his daughter lived, he ministered to her bodily ease and comfort with all the



care and tenderness of the most loving nurse, and to her spiritual consolation with all the affectionate yearning of a true "father in God." Writing to his wife, he said, "I believe the Lord has sent me to London to learn gratitude from the heart of your own flesh and blood. I never saw such a happy creature, or one more thankful in all my life. She has often been made a blessing to my soul since I came hither, and not only to me, but to others who come to see her in her affliction. She enjoys perfect love—that which casts out fear—and is fit either for living or dying. I often think, if you were to see her in this happy state, it would rejoice your heart. It is above all riches to see a dear child of ours so happy." Mrs Wrathall soon afterwards died in the Lord, and her father remained for a few months longer in London : the ministering priest at the altar of his son-in-law's household, as well as the prophet of the Lord in the public services of His sanctuaries.

Samuel's stay in London was abruptly terminated on account of the death of Mrs Pullein of Follifoot, who had exacted from him a promise that he would preach her funeral sermon, if he survived her, and was otherwise able to do so. The friends of the deceased did not desire Samuel to return to Yorkshire specially for the purpose, and his brethren in the Metropolis strongly endeavoured to persuade him to remain with them a little while longer ; but, such was the sacredness with which he regarded his word and promise, that he was deaf to the solicitations of others, and, stifling his own desires to sojourn longer in a sphere where he had been supremely happy, he started for the North. After travelling a distance of upwards of two hundred miles, with but little rest by the way, he improved the departure of his friend by preaching a sermon, remarkable for its pointed brevity, from the text, "Let me die the death of the righteous." After a short stay at home, marked by



earnest labour among his neighbours and the people of his own Circuits, he again started on an extended tour as a herald of the King of kings. In the Snaith, Pocklington, York, Tadcaster, and Selby Circuits he rendered signal service to the cause of the Gospel, while he lengthened the cords and strengthened the stakes of Methodism in the various places which he visited. We find him, in one Circuit, taking the minister's appointments ; in another, collecting subscriptions for a chapel ; in all, conducting revival services ; while the blessing of the Lord attends his labours, and the hand of the Lord rests upon him for good. At Hessay, Acomb, and Moormonkton, his ministrations were specially honoured of God in the conversion of sinners, and in the building up of His people in their most holy faith. When in the neighbourhood of York he received an unexpected and timely addition to the funds of his travelling exchequer, through the kindness of his son-in-law, who was returning to London after a journey to the North. Samuel looked upon this circumstance as a providential relief to him by the Master whom he served. "When I was nearly done with my money," he said, "the Lord sent my son to York, who gave me more." Indeed, in all the events which marked his journey towards his eternal home, he never failed to acknowledge God as being the great Disposer of these, for His own glory, and the good of His believing children. Stricken in years, yet still animated by an intense desire to be useful in his day and generation, he reached Easingwold on the 4th April 1829. Here he preached and exhorted, besides taking a prominent part in various Missionary Meetings that were held in neighbouring villages. In describing his experiences during his visit to this corner of the Lord's vineyard, he said, in his own simple way, "I preached last night, April 24th, on the other side of the Hambleton Hills ; and the Lord, and Mr Roadhouse, and



me, held a Missionary Meeting. It is a mountainous country, but very pleasant. The people came from all quarters—from hill and dale : the chapel was crowded, and we had a good time. I never saw friends more kind. . . . I believe that the Lord as surely sent me into this Circuit, as He sent Jonah to preach to the Ninevites. He waters my soul with the dews of heaven. If I had ten thousand bodies and souls, they should all be spent in the service of God." From Easingwold he proceeded to Carlton and other places, where his exhortations were greatly blessed to the people of the various Societies, and to others who had till then been "without hope." Multitudes waited upon his ministry ; many for the first time called upon the Lord. With increase of years, it seemed as if his powers for usefulness had become augmented and intensified. In the seventieth year of his age, it is related, he moved about from place to place with all the warmth of a new convert, and with all the energy of youth : attending three Missionary Meetings in one week, besides evening preaching, visiting the sick, and the necessary travelling. But the day for the fulfilment of an appointment of more than usual interest to him drew nigh—an interest excited by the expectation of meeting his dear friend and brother in Christ, William Dawson.

On the 14th May 1829, Samuel quitted Easingwold, where his labours had been supremely acceptable, for the purpose of attending a Missionary Meeting to be held at Hemsley Black Moor. Cheered by the thought of being able again to hold sweet fellowship with an eminent brother in the Local Ministry, he had proceeded on his way till within about three miles of his destination, when his horse took fright at a passing vehicle, and, wheeling suddenly round, threw its rider upon the highway. The shock caused by this untoward occurrence was, of course, great



to one of Samuel's years and large bodily frame, though, fortunately, none of his bones had been broken by the fall. Nevertheless, he attended the meeting, and would have taken an active part in its business, had he not been obliged, through excessive pain and physical weakness, to forego the pleasure he had promised to himself. Removed to the house of a kind and sympathising friend, a surgeon attended and bled him copiously. While the stream of life was flowing from his wounded arm, and anticipating a fatal result to the accident which had, in the providence of God, befallen him, he exclaimed, "Glory be to God! If I die, I'll get to heaven the sooner." Afterwards, when the bandage had been partially displaced, and the blood began to flow afresh, he said, with holy exultation, "I am *bown* home! Glory be to God! I am *bown* home." After the Missionary Meeting had been concluded, Mr Dawson waited upon his old friend, who saluted him in a tone of joyful sorrow. "I am *bown* home, *barn*," he said. "Glory be to God! I am very happy." "Well, Sammy," replied Mr Dawson, "you are a *brown sheller*,"—a term well understood by the invalided soldier of the Cross as referring to fruit or grain ripe for gathering and the harvest. "Yes," replied Samuel, "I am *bown* to glory." But his time for departure had not yet fully come. A few more weeks of labour elapsed before the worn-out servant of the Lord entered upon his eternal rest.

Two days after the accident, Samuel was so far restored to his wonted spirits as to be able to return to Easingwold, where he preached on the Sabbath evening, and conducted a Prayer-meeting on the following day. Although his strength had been evidently reduced, and his usual vigour seriously impaired, his indomitable mental energy and hope of reward sustained his bodily powers, and blinded his friends to the fact that only for a short time had he stepped



back from the brink of the grave. Returning home, he preached at Mickfield and the neighbourhood for a short time, and proceeded thence to Lancashire, by way of Swillington, Wakefield, and Barnsley. At the latter town he sojourned for many days, varying his ministrations there by preaching occasionally at Burton and Cudworth, and supplying the temporal wants of poor families in the immediate vicinity. At Cudworth his labours were blessed in bringing one, who afterwards became a successful Preacher of righteousness, into the glorious liberty of the Gospel. After labouring at Dodworth and Hoyland Swaine for a few weeks, he arrived at Bolton on the 10th August, where he wrought with much of his old freedom and fervour. Besides preaching in the various chapels, he frequently ministered in the open air, and hesitated not to declare a full, perfect, and free salvation by Christ, even when opposed by the ribaldry and derision of the infidel and the ungodly. When thus engaged one day, an incident occurred which brought out into bold relief the tender love and sympathy which filled his breast towards the person and sufferings of his Saviour. An unbelieving scoffer at the truths which he proclaimed, charged the Saviour with stealing the ass which bore Him in triumph to Jerusalem, as well as the ears of corn which He had plucked while walking beside the growing grain with His disciples. Samuel zealously repelled the unjust attack upon the Redeemer's character, and with all the holy indignation of a nature keenly susceptible to the faintest shadow of reflection upon the honour of Him whom he loved and served. Afterwards, when engaged in conversation with his friends upon the circumstance, he said, with tearful emotion, "I have heard of my dear Lord being called a wine-bibber, a gluttonous man, and a friend to publicans and sinners; but I never heard Him called a thief and a robber



before, though crucified between two." Leaving Bolton, he proceeded to Skipton during a heavy fall of rain, which saturated his clothes, and sowed the seeds of the illness which terminated his life on earth. At Skipton a niece of his resided, who was very ill, and not expected to recover. Beside the couch of suffering, overshadowed by the angel of death, Samuel watched and ministered with all the tenderness of a loving relative, and with all the zeal of a faithful minister of the Most High. Writing to his wife on the subject of his charge, he remarked, "She has obtained a title and a preparation for her heavenly inheritance. She has oil in her vessel, and has on the wedding garment. The Lord has taken a vast deal of pains with her, but He has proved the conqueror. She can give up all; and when this is the case, we receive all. It takes a great deal of grace to say 'Thy will be done.'" In a few days after her uncle's arrival, she died "in the Lord." Proceeding to Grassington and Hebden, Samuel laboured at both places with considerable success for a few days, and then turned his steps homeward.

Exposure to severe weather so soon after the accident to which we have referred engendered an affection of the lungs, from which he never completely recovered. Consequently, after his arrival at Micklefield, his public ministrations were limited to a few occasions, including attendance at one Missionary Meeting at East Keswick, and another at Garforth. Although able to move about until a short time before his death, he became feeble and debilitated in body, and, with mental powers almost unimpaired, he spoke of his coming dissolution as of a release from toil and entrance upon a glorious inheritance. With his wonted simplicity of heart, and with a single eye to the glory of God and the eternal welfare of his fellow-creatures, he made arrangements for his funeral, and the improvement of



his death. Five days before his decease, he was visited by Mr Dawson, who received from him final instructions regarding the disposal of his few earthly possessions, and the preparation of homely refreshment for the mourners upon the day of his burial. Mr Dawson thoughtfully remonstrated with him on the latter point, but to no purpose. "When the multitudes came to our Lord, He could not think of them fainting by the way," said Samuel to his friend ; and the latter refrained from further argument on a question which had been raised by him out of tender regard for the welfare of the aged matron who was so soon to become a widow. Two young members of the Pontefract Society sat beside the couch of the dying saint during his last night upon earth. One of them, when relating the circumstances afterwards, said, "I have spent whole nights in reading and prayer, but the night spent by the bedside of Samuel Hick exceeded them all." The honoured servant of God had now almost done with his favourite exercise—prayer : praise occupied all his thoughts, and flowed from his overcharged heart in songs of thanksgiving. "Sing, joys, sing," he said ; and the young men, in obedience to his call, began the grand doxology, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." Samuel joined in singing the beautiful stanza of Bishop Kenn with a feebler voice than was his wont, but with a spirit "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." He was asked if he had any desire to be restored to his friends and his dearly-loved labours in the Gospel. "No," he answered without hesitation ; then, after a moment's thought, he added, "If it would glorify God, and do good to souls, I should be willing." He frequently exclaimed, "Glory, glory, glory !" and at one time, fervently uttered, as though communing with himself, the following sentences :—"I shall see Him for myself, and not for another. The Lord has wrought a



miracle for me. He can—I know He can—I cannot dispute it. Christ in me the hope of glory! I am like the miser: the more I have, the more I want.” At his request the hymn was sung beginning—

“What are these arrayed in white,  
Brighter than the noonday sun,  
Foremost of the sons of light,  
Nearest the eternal throne?”

He frequently waved his hand in triumph during the singing, and when it had ended he said, “Blessed Jesus! this cheers my spirits.” One of the young men said to him, “You will soon be among the dead, Samuel.” To which he replied, “No doubt about that; but I am ready to be offered up—Glory be to the Lamb! Mercy of mercies! Lord save me!” In reply to a question regarding the solicitude of his friends, he said, “Tell them, joy, that I have all packed up—that I am still in the old ship, with my anchor cast within the veil—and that my sails are up, filled with a heavenly breeze. In a short time I shall be launched into the heavenly ocean.” Radiant joyfulness illuminated his countenance all through the night—a night never to be forgotten by those who were privileged to witness the motions of perfect love, exalted faith, assured hope, and holy triumph in the dying Preacher.

A few hours before his death, some of his friends came to visit him. They found him too feeble to pray with them audibly, but with great effort he repeated the first verse of one of his favourite hymns, “I’ll praise my Maker while I’ve breath,” &c. His confidence in God was unshaken to the last; but he disclaimed any merit in himself as a ground of his acceptance in the sight of his Maker. He impressed upon his friends the importance of personal religion; but there was no boasting on his part of anything he had him-



self accomplished or suffered for the cause of Christ. As the time of his departure drew nigh, another hymn was sung by those present ; and Samuel seemed fully to enter into its spirit, though unable through bodily weakness to repeat the words—

“ The everlasting doors shall soon the saints receive,  
Above yon angel powers, in glorious joy to live :  
Far from a world of grief and sin,  
With God eternally shut in.”

As the first line was being sung, he raised his hand, moist with the dew of death, and waved it in token of his personal realisation of the truth which the words conveyed, and of his victory over the last enemy. “ Peace, joy, love ! ” were among the last words he uttered. Thus died Samuel Hick, the village blacksmith, and an honoured Preacher of the Gospel of Christ, on the 9th November 1829, in the seventy-first year of his age. On the Sabbath following (15th November), all that was mortal of this useful servant of God was deposited in the churchyard of Aberford, about two miles from Micklefield. It was computed that the number of those who followed his remains to their last resting-place, together with the friends that assembled at the church, could not have been far short of one thousand ; so much was he respected, valued, and beloved. Had not the weather been somewhat unpropitious, it is highly probable that the number would have been largely increased. The church was filled to overflowing, many being unable to obtain admission. As a mark of personal respect to the memory of his more humble brother, the Vicar read the Burial Service, and committed the “ dust to dust,” in sure hope of the resurrection of the just. As the large assemblage filed past the grave to take a farewell look of the coffin, many said, “ If ever there was a good man, Sammy



Hick was one." His departure from this earthly scene was improved by William Dawson on the Lord's Day succeeding that on which the interment took place. The text on which the address was founded had been selected by Samuel himself, from Isaiah; chap. xlviii. ver. 18:—"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." The chapel being incapable of accommodating the large congregation that met on the occasion, Mr Dawson took his stand in the open air, the snow lying deep upon the ground, and the chill air creating much physical discomfort alike to Preacher and hearers. But, warmed with the fire of Divine love, both soon forgot the outward circumstances under which they had met, while the presence of the great Master of assemblies cheered and comforted many disconsolate hearts. Additional sermons, to the number of twelve or upwards, were also preached in various Circuits: all having for their object the spiritual welfare of the people, while contemplating the humble zeal, the devoted love, the genuine faith, the inestimable works, and the glorious reward of the village blacksmith.

As a Preacher, Samuel Hick was sincere and earnest, rather than polished and eloquent. Unable to classify his thoughts, or to arrange his sentences with neatness, he devoted more time and attention to the reading and study of the Word of God than to literal preparation of his pulpit addresses. His sermons and exhortations were, therefore, more remarkable for their expository comments and experimental appeals, than for their ornate diction. Indeed, his phraseology was generally of the most homely character, and such as was most likely to be well understood by the majority of those among whom he laboured. Upon one occasion, a friend kindly remonstrated with him upon his want of systematic arrangement in his discourses. Samuel's



reply will convey some idea of the form and tendency of his oral declarations, much better than any description of our own. "Why, bless you, *barn*," said he, "*I give it them hot off the bakestone*." Thereby intimating that the spiritual food which he provided for the people was not allowed to become *cold*, by too much attention being paid to the mere *manner* in which it was to be presented at the Gospel feast. His diligence as a labourer in the Lord's vineyard was truly remarkable. As though by instinct, he *created* opportunities for serving his Divine Master acceptably and with profit. Prayer to him was not so much a duty as a pleasure, from which he could not be dissociated. With childlike trust and boldness he hourly supplicated his Heavenly Father for some special favour, protection, or guidance. His faith could brook no obstacles, submit to no limits, rest on no small attainments. His hope was lively, certain, steadfast. He loved his fellow-creatures with an impassioned fervour, inferior only to the sacred affection which he bore towards his Saviour and his God. Wesleyan Methodism has tangible reasons for venerating the name and memory of the Blacksmith-Preacher of the Yorkshire village.



*TIMOTHY HACKWORTH.*

THE eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are historically remarkable as embracing a period in which many men of most illustrious talents entered the arena of life. Politically and religiously considered, this period forms a new and notable epoch in the history of our nation ; while regarded in relation to discoveries in science and the achievements of invention, it has changed the aspect of commerce throughout the world. Anterior to the time mentioned, crude notions of mechanical contrivances had, no doubt, engaged the attention of many ; but, subsequently, these ideas became matured, other conceptions were formed and amplified, and all were made subservient to the temporal interests of mankind. We have only to look around upon the staple productions of the country, and trace their origin and extension, in order to obtain some adequate idea of the truth of this statement. Electricity, for instance, has been pressed into the service of man, and with marvellous swiftness conveys his thoughts or wishes through the valley, over the mountain, across the plain, and under the ocean ; while in other respects it has become his obedient slave. Steam has also been made to do the bidding of man, and has given motion to the most complex machinery in manufacturing establishments, as well as propelled the sailless ship, of leviathan build, over the mighty deep with wonderful rapidity ; while by its aid the "iron horse" has traversed with amazing speed nearly every quarter of the globe. Chemistry has discovered to



us the nature and uses of the metalliferous rocks, and from earth and stones has transmuted gold, silver, and other precious substances. Indeed, the necessity or desirability for anything only required to be recognised, and the want was quickly supplied. In this manner was conceived those exquisitely beautiful arts by which materials for clothing our bodies are manufactured, by which portions of our food are constantly provided and prepared, and through which we are surrounded with the necessities, elegancies, and luxuries of life. Generally the name of an inventor is coupled with the appellation of that which was the creation of his intellect. Thus do we speak of Arkwright and the "spinning-jenny," of Davy and the "safety-lamp," of Armstrong and the "hydraulic-crane," or of others who have benefited the world by their constructive genius. And following the practice of connecting men with their works, we give the title of "inventor" to Timothy Hackworth, the subject of our present notice, and produce evidence in favour of his claim to such a distinction. While doing so, however, by describing his career in relation to an important branch of our national industry, it is not our purpose to depart from the more particular design of this work. On the contrary, we shall endeavour to exhibit the main features of his character as a man, as a Christian, and as a Preacher of the Gospel of Christ.

Timothy Hackworth was born at Wylam, a Northumberland village situate about eight miles to the west of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on the 22d December 1786. But little information has been furnished to us respecting the moral and social condition of his parents, but we are enabled to conclude that they were humble yet upright persons. Adopting the handicraft of his ancestors, John Hackworth, the father of Timothy, filled the position of foreman-



blacksmith at Wylam Colliery. In the discharge of his duties, he not only distinguished himself at a time of emergency, but also earned some repute as a boiler-builder and mechanical contriver. Himself a skilled artisan, the fact that his son evinced a strong passion and considerable aptitude for the study and practice of mechanics, naturally gave him much satisfaction and pleasure. The intellectual bias of the lad had just attained a partial development, however, when the death of his father took place. After receiving a fair education at the village school, Timothy was, at the age of fourteen, apprenticed as a blacksmith to the proprietors of the colliery, and he had only served two years of his apprenticeship when his father's decease deprived him of the support and tutor of his childhood. This dispensation of Divine Providence deeply affected the affectionate spirit of the stripling, while to the saddening influence thus exerted was added the care of providing for his mother and the family. To one so young the position was critical and momentous. On the one hand, there were the claims of filial affection and duty, on the other, the allurements and temptations of youth. In him the hope and confidence of his mother were centred, while the welfare of others depended then, in no inconsiderable degree, upon the manner in which he discharged the sacred trust which had been confided to his keeping. Under the trying circumstances, the conduct of young Hackworth was exemplary and praiseworthy. Pursuing the duties of his calling with regularity and faithfulness, and bringing to their discharge natural talents of no mean order, he speedily won the esteem and confidence of all who were associated with him in his daily labours, not only in a subordinate but superior capacity. Such was the estimate of his ability by the managers of the colliery, and so high was their opinion of his character, that he was appointed to



the post of foreman-blacksmith on the expiry of the term of his servitude as an apprentice.

Having become deeply interested in the construction and adaptation of the locomotive engine for the purpose for which it was intended to be applied, Timothy Hackworth took the most active part in introducing it at Wylam Colliery. In all the preliminary experiments attendant upon this very important undertaking, the young mechanic exhibited the first-fruits of a latent mental power and inventive skill which were afterwards to gain for him the proud soubriquet of "the Father of Locomotives." Yet was this a critical period in his history. Without religion—the only infallible guide to a truly successful career—he was entering the highway of life. He had passed the first twenty-four years of his existence a stranger to the grace of God, and was still in "the gall of bitterness and bondage of iniquity." It is true that he had with devoted attachment clung to his widowed parent, and, while entering occasionally into some of the gaities or follies of early manhood, had been restrained from indulging in open vice, and from committing flagrant acts of sin; still, however, he remained without serious impressions regarding his soul's welfare, and a sense of the true purpose of being. When about twenty-five years of age, he began to attend the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel of the village, and under the faithful preaching of plain but earnest Christian men, he was led to behold himself a sinner—guilty before the law, and daily exposed to the wrath of God. These powerful convictions of sin, with their concomitant fear of eternal banishment from the Divine presence, rendered his state wearisome and unbearable. For three months he "groaned, being burdened." But the conditional promise, "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for He will have mercy upon him,



and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon," was in due time to be verified in his happy experience. By the light of grace he had discovered his true character before God ; by the power of grace there had been produced in him a hatred towards sin, and a desire for strength to walk in the ways of righteousness ; and now, by the same agency, his inner man was about to be blessed with "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," and which "the world can neither give nor take away." Earnestly seeking the pardon of his sins, he began to meet in Class, but at two successive meetings he could not describe the state of his mind. Broken and contrite in heart and spirit, he wept before the Lord. At the third service, however, every barrier of unbelief was thrown down ; he so believed in Christ as to feel that he had redemption by His blood ; while peace and joy in the Holy Ghost filled his ravished soul with ineffable bliss. Thus, on the 31st March 1811, did Timothy Hackworth first enjoy the glorious sunshine of the presence and favour of the Almighty.

The darkness of unregeneracy gave place to the light of God's truth and love ; tears of contrition were followed by smiles of gratitude ; the manacles and rags of Satan and sin were exchanged for the yoke and robe of Christ and His righteousness. Well might he say, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift !" Now his ruling desire was that others might enjoy the fruits of a like precious faith. Earnestly longing for more spiritual enjoyment himself, and careful to maintain good works, he readily embraced every opportunity for urging upon others the advantages and necessity of pure and undefiled religion. To his former associates in callous indifference or thoughtless sin, to his fellow-workmen at the anvil, and to the villagers with whom he came into contact, the one absorbing theme of his daily thoughts was prudently introduced. Occasionally, too, his



zeal for Christ carried him beyond the limits of private intercourse, and in the public ear he sounded the Gospel-trumpet. Nor were his exhortations or warnings unaccompanied by gracious results in those to whom they were addressed. The earnestness with which he spoke, the propriety and aptness of the language he used, together with the incontestable proofs of a gracious change in the speaker's own heart, commended the message he delivered to the people, and the seed of the Word was abundantly watered by the Master of the vineyard. Many cases of real conversion were the results of Hackworth's early labours in the Gospel, one of which we record. While engaged in prayer at a devotional meeting upon one occasion, he pleaded powerfully at the Throne of Grace for an outpouring of the Divine blessing, and an answer to the supplication was vouchsafed in the spiritual awakening of a confirmed drunkard who was then present. The man was so unhappy, and so anxious to find Christ as the Prince of Peace, that he entered the Wesleyan Class-meeting on the following Sabbath, without having obtained the consent of the members or Leader. The latter, being either unacquainted with the man's condition, or doubting the sincerity of his professions, requested him to leave the company. At this, the poor, sin-stricken soul was deeply affected, and embracing Hackworth, exclaimed, "This is the man! this is the man!" The results were, that they all bowed themselves at the mercy-seat; the prayer of the righteous prevailed, the penitent sinner found salvation in Christ, and to the end of his life was a humble and consistent follower of the Lamb. In this connection, another example of the efficacy of his petitions to the King of kings may be noted. The managing proprietor of the works at Walbottle, where he was foreman, becoming alarmingly ill, the medical men who were called in could not give any hopes of his ultimate



recovery. Hackworth, being informed of the dangerous nature of the manager's malady, and feeling a tender solicitude on account thereof, devoted a day to fasting and prayer. While pleading earnestly to God for his master's recovery, the account of good King Hezekiah's illness, and the result of the monarch's supplication to the God of Israel, were applied with power to the Local Preacher's mind. Receiving that impression as a token for good, he was encouraged to pray even more importunately than before, and, to the wonderment of many, the gentleman regained his usual health. Like that of the King of Judah, his life thereafter extended to a period of fifteen years precisely !

His membership with the Methodist Society at Wylam had not been of more than a few months' duration, when he was urgently requested to assume the duties of a regular exhorter in the Church. Complying with that request, his services were eagerly sought by the Societies of the adjacent villages, and thus were channels opened up to him through which might flow the active energies of his renewed nature, for the spiritual good of others. His labours tended to awaken those who slept in the arms of the "wicked one," and were conducive to the growth in grace of those who had already fled for refuge to "the hope set before us in the Gospel." Accordingly, the Superintendent of the Newcastle Circuit, the Rev. Dr Taft, was solicited to place Mr Hackworth's name upon the Plan as that of a Local Preacher. Having acceded to the former request of his brethren in the faith and become an exhorter, Mr Hackworth could not conscientiously refuse to obey the voice of the Church, when she demanded his services in a more onerous and dignified capacity. He therefore undertook the office which had been proffered for his acceptance, in trustful reliance upon the promise of Him who has said, "As your day, so shall your strength be." At Paradise, in Northumberland, he



preached his "trial-sermon ;" and, by the unanimous consent of those with whom he was to be associated in the Lay-Ministry, his name was enrolled upon the Preachers' Plan of the Circuit. But he had not long been identified as an accredited labourer in the vineyard of the Lord, when persecution raised her menacing hand and uttered threats of evil. Passing the colliery one Sabbath-day while on his way to an appointment, the following conversation took place between himself and a workman who had accosted him. "*Where's thee gannen?*" the man asked. Hackworth replied, "I am going to preach." "*Is thee not gannen tae dee this wark?*" was further interrogated. "I have other work than that to do to-day," was the reply. "*Well, if thou'll not, somebody else will, an' thou'll lose thee job.*" "Lose or not lose, I shall not break the Sabbath," Hackworth rejoined as he quitted his fellow-workman and went on his way. On the matter being represented at headquarters, the Preacher was discharged from his secular employment. This was to him a testing time. Now he must either leave Christ or leave his work and the present means whereby himself and those dear to him subsisted. He must either honour God or regard man. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, he resolved upon doing the right, and he did so. But He who has said, "He that honoureth me, him also will I honour," forsook not His faithful servant while he passed through this trying ordeal, nor allowed him to suffer in his temporal estate, on account of his heroic obedience to the mandate of Heaven, and his reverence for the sanctity of that day which the Almighty Himself had set apart. On the contrary, while one door was being closed against him, another was opened to receive him.

The loss of his situation at Wylam was not to his personal disadvantage, as his enemies intended it should be. Upon leaving the works in which he had served his apprentice-



ship, he was engaged as foreman-smith at the neighbouring colliery of Walbottle. This position he held not only with much credit to himself, but also to the satisfaction of his employers, while it was, as we shall see, the precursor of more responsible spheres to which he was afterwards to be called. Having settled down at Walbottle, he readily undertook the office of Class-Leader, which, in conjunction with his pulpit labours, entailed upon him much careful study and diligent effort. But love lightened toil, persistence removed obstacles, and that which others would have deemed a burden, was indeed to Timothy Hackworth a pleasure. By a devoted spirit of persevering energy was his whole life, in the world and in the Church, characterised. His love to God and man seemed to soften the harsher circumstances of his being, and to sweeten his intercourse with those around him. A holy affection lent a charm to his nature, and gave effect to his pulpit utterances. As a Preacher of the Gospel, charity shone conspicuously in his ministrations. Possessed of a considerable amount of knowledge, and gifted with powers of felicitous expression, he was able to explain clearly whatever was passing in his thoughts, while a godly walk and conversation gave strength to his assertions. But his exalted love attracted the attention of others to a greater extent than either his eloquence or his piety, although both were of a genuine caste ; and while it rarely failed to subdue or extinguish the bitterness of opposition, it frequently caused tears to flow alike from the eyes of the Preacher and his hearers.

With such an amiable disposition as he invariably exhibited, we do not wonder at his being a popular advocate on behalf of Sunday-schools, nor at his being often called upon to officiate in connection with Anniversary Services. The extreme tenderness of his nature was displayed in the kindly condescension with which he addressed children as



their teacher, and in the familiarity with which he patted a youngster's head when the latter was at play. The generous qualities of his mind and feelings of his heart were shown, in a marked degree, when he went to reside at New Shildon, in the Bishop Auckland Circuit. In the year 1826, Methodism was but little known in the district to which Hackworth had removed. The Society was composed of three members only, one of whom resided at Old Shildon, the other two at Eldon. Truly the circumstances were not encouraging, but the Local Preacher began his work for God in the new sphere to which he had been called, in firm dependence upon the power of redeeming grace. Finding that the schoolroom at Old Shildon, where the meetings were usually held, was frequently closed against the congregation, he opened his own house for religious service, and an office attached thereto was especially set apart as a Bethel for Christ's people : not a few finding therein their spiritual birthplace. With the assistance of other fellow-labourers, Hackworth persevered in his efforts to warn sinners of the danger of continuing in a state of alienation from God, and eventually had the happiness of reaping an abundant harvest in the Gospel field. To the regular services, in which the Word was preached or expounded, were supplemented Prayer-meetings and a Class ; the latter being under the fostering care of him to whom the little band of worshippers owed so much of spiritual advantage. In course of time the seed thus sown began to germinate and grow, until it produced "first the ear, then the full corn in the ear." The Class became so large, that it had in consequence to be divided, and that process was, from the same cause, several times repeated. The number of those who regularly attended the stated services also increased to such an extent, that it was deemed necessary to build a chapel. Thus did Methodism originate, continue, and pro-



sper in New Shildon, under the zealous direction of an honoured though humble Local Preacher, and the co-operation of his brethren in the Gospel. But the labours of Timothy Hackworth were not confined to the place of his residence. Etherley and Escomb, Evenwood and West Auckland, with other villages in the District—then rising into importance—were visited by him as a herald of the truth. How much that District, with its teeming population, owes to this Methodist pioneer, whose history now claims our attention, eternity alone will disclose.

There are other aspects in which the character of Timothy Hackworth must be viewed ; and for this purpose it will be necessary to retrace our steps in order to consider some points in his history, previous to his removal to the county of Durham. The period from which his religious career is dated was not only to him one of great moral consequence, but also of critical relation to his reputation as an engineer. About the year 1811, Wylam was the scene of many interesting and clever experiments in engine-building. In preliminary trials, which were fraught with considerable benefit to the commerce of his country and to the world at large, he took great interest, and acted a very prominent and useful part. Believing in the practicability of the locomotive for the purpose intended, and desirous of bringing its successful construction to a practical issue in the conveyance of coals from Wylam to Lemington, the proprietors of Wylam Colliery ordered an engine to be built at Gateshead, according to Trevithick's plan. It did not, however, answer the purpose, and it was laid aside. But the idea of steam locomotion, having been once entertained, was not to be discarded on account of failure in the early attempts to bring it into use ; nor did the earnest men who were engaged in the work of seeking to bring the locomotive to maturity relax in their efforts to attain this



desirable object. Accordingly, Mr Blackett, one of the proprietors of the colliery in question, ordered the building of a second engine at Wylam. This was done by Thomas Waters of Gateshead, assisted by the foreman-smith of the colliery, Timothy Hackworth ; but being defective in some of its parts, the boiler burst by reason of the excessive pressure put upon it with a view to setting the machinery in motion ; the attendants and onlookers meanwhile narrowly escaping destruction. Undeterred from the prosecution of his scheme by repeated want of success, Mr Blackett directed Jonathan Foster, his principal engine-wright, to commence the construction of a third engine, and, with the assistance of Hackworth and the viewer of the colliery, Mr Hedley, the work was successfully concluded. This machine exhibited a marked improvement upon its predecessors, and this was followed by important discoveries in regard to the relative connection between the locomotive and railway. For the purpose of determining the proportion of weight to propelling power, keeping in view the principle of adhesion, Mr Hedley had caused to be erected suitable machinery, by means of which to conduct experiments. By practical demonstration he was enabled to conclude that, without the aid of "toothed wheels," "endless chains," "legs," and "rack-rails"—parts of the early locomotive that were deemed necessary to its progression—an engine would run upon rails without slipping, and simply by the agency of its own weight. Thus did the illustrious owner of Wylam Colliery and his notable servants devise means which were introductory to the development and perfection of the most remarkable agency in the social economy of modern times.

In the year 1815, Hackworth's connection with Wylam Colliery terminated, and he removed, as already noticed, to Walbottle, where he entered upon a similar engagement to the one he had left. This new position he held meritori-



ously until the year 1824, when, at the request of Mr George Stephenson, he went to Newcastle for the purpose of taking the management of the now celebrated "Stephenson's Works," in the absence of the "first railway engineer," who was engaged in surveying the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. In Newcastle, the efficient manner in which he discharged his duties was such as won the commendation of Mr Stephenson, and elicited from him a proposal that Hackworth should enter the firm of Robert Stephenson & Co. as a partner on the most liberal terms. This Hackworth declined—for what reason is not stated—and also another offer, made to him about the same time, which latter was the direction of an exploring expedition to Venezuela, Trinidad, and New Granada. Upon leaving the establishment of Stephenson & Co., he undertook the building of some boilers for the Tyne Iron Company. Subsequently, he hired premises with a view to commencing business on his own account, but had just completed the preliminary arrangements for his occupancy, when there was offered to him, through the medium of Mr George Stephenson, the appointment of Resident Engineer and Manager of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. This he accepted, and entered upon the duties in June 1825. Before him now lay a fine field for exertion, and prospects of honourable distinction. The Stockton and Darlington Railway—the first in the world—had just been laid ; its arrangements had not been perfected ; around him were incentives to ingenuity ; and in the capacity he was called to fill there was licence given to him to make what he considered to be necessary improvements. The history of this railway is, so far as mechanical contrivances are concerned, the history of Timothy Hackworth. Upon its requirements he expended a vast amount of mental energy ; with its growth and success, his labours and reputation became recognised and extended ; while with its



development several inventions of material importance were identified.

The first railway opened for general traffic was *not* inaugurated under circumstances of the most auspicious nature. As is frequently the case in new ventures, considerable difference of opinion prevailed respecting the proper mode of working. On the question of the means of propulsion, for instance, some advocated the use of "stationary engines ;" others, again, were attached to the old-fashioned "horse-power ;" while a third party was ranged under the banner of the "locomotives." The construction of the latter being inferior, both as regards design and workmanship, from a want of experience on the part of engineers and artisans engaged therein, much opposition was brought to bear against the general adoption of locomotive steam-power on railways : a circumstance which entailed a vast amount of anxiety and studious application upon the talented manager of the Stockton and Darlington line. Besides, the railway system being yet in its infancy, much difficulty was often experienced in providing for the necessities of the moment, and the ever-increasing requirements of the "iron highway." For some time after the opening of the line in question, horses were employed in competition with engines, as well as on occasions when the derangement of working-gear necessitated the use of animal-power ; and so unsatisfactorily did the locomotives perform their service, that the directors had almost decided upon substituting stationary engines, or the useful quadrupeds just named, for what was considered to be impracticable, if not dangerous machinery. The illustrious engineers George and Robert Stephenson were cognisant of the momentous state of matters referred to, and watched with painful interest a course of events which threatened to condemn the "iron-



horse " to oblivion, and to render fruitless the patience, research, and labour of years. In answer to communications from these gentlemen, Hackworth expressed his unfailing confidence in the ultimate triumph of the locomotive, and inspired his friends with some of his own sanguine hopes. But the desired object could not be attained without great exertion, and the question of its achievement could only then be satisfactorily solved by the engineer of the infant railway. Equal to the emergency, Hackworth proposed to build an engine that would travel with greater speed, draw a heavier load, and consume a less quantity of fuel. On condition that he would utilise the boiler of a locomotive which had been discarded, he received permission to execute his design. Accordingly, the *Royal George*—the first of a class which has become universal, and which had *the "blast-pipe" fitted to it as an original experiment*—was built under the immediate superintendence of him who has been appropriately designated the "Father of Locomotives." The result bore out the accuracy of the calculations of its designer, and gave an impetus to projects which have developed into undertakings of the most comprehensive and valuable character. The following comparison is so succinct and decisive, and shows so clearly the relative merits of what were then antagonistic forces, that we cannot forbear quoting it for the information of such of our readers as have not already familiarised themselves with the early history of railways:—"Cost of *Royal George*, £425; number of tons conveyed by her in one year (1828), 22,442 tons over twenty miles; cost of conveyance, one farthing per ton per mile, or, including all repairs and maintenance, and interest on sunk capital at 10 per cent., £466: an economy in working which is rarely exceeded at the present day, after a lapse of *twenty-three years*. The cost of the same



work performed by horses was £998, showing a difference of £532 in favour of the engine over the animal power!"\* In the engine to which this quotation refers, there was not only the "blast-pipe" introduced for the first time, but also the "short-stroked force-pump," and "set of adjustable springs for the safety-valves, instead of weights;" all which improvements were the results of the practical research and inventive capacity of the engineer whose life now demands our attention.

Another highly important question was propounded early in the following year (1829), and to its satisfactory solution Hackworth brought his mechanical skill, ripe experience, and persevering industry. The projectors of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway had deliberated upon the merits and disadvantages of each of the modes of conveyance which engaged public attention at the time, but without coming to any definite decision as to the one to be adopted in the working of their own line. Having appointed a deputation to inspect and report upon the railways of the North of England, the opinion of those gentlemen was against the use of horse-power; and a recommendation was further made to the directors of the last-named railway, to refer the respective claims of the standing and travelling engines to professional arbitrament. Accordingly, Mr Rustrick of Stourbridge and Mr Walker of Limehouse, the gentlemen selected, investigated and framed a report upon the subject. Their deliverance was opposed to the adoption of the locomotive as a propelling power, and the directors of the company were necessarily obliged to give some amount of consideration and respect to the report of gentlemen of high standing in the profession. For the purpose of refuting their statements, it would have been vain to employ arguments that

\* *Practical Mechanics' Journal*, vol. iii. p. 49.



were not based upon facts elucidated by the daily experience of those who were engaged in the task of developing the railway systems already in existence ; and experience had so far tended, for the most part, to shake the confidence of engineers in the utility of the locomotive. At such a juncture as we have described, Hackworth was appealed to as the man of all others most capable of forming a just opinion regarding the matter in question. His review of the history of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, and his description of the capabilities of the locomotive, with its prospects in relation to further improvement, were of the most masterly character, and tended greatly to encourage the giant spirits of the age to prosecute to a successful issue schemes which were destined to alter materially our social aspects, and give a mighty impulse to the commerce of the world. The correspondence of the Stockton and Darlington engineer with Mr Robert Stephenson is so interesting in itself, and throws such light upon the history of that momentous time, that we make no apology for transcribing a part of it, for the benefit of such of our readers as may not have had an opportunity for its perusal.

On the 17th March 1829, Mr R. Stephenson writes :—  
“The reports of the engineers who visited the North to ascertain the relative merits of the two systems of steam machinery now employed on railways, have come to conclusions in favour of *stationary engines*. They have increased the performance of fixed engines beyond what practice will bear out, and, I regret to say, they have depreciated the locomotive engines below what experience has taught us. I will not say whether these results have arisen from prejudice, or want of information or practice on the subject. This is not a point which I will presume to discuss. I write now to obtain answers to some questions on



which I think they have not given full information. Some of their calculations are also at variance with experiments that have come under your daily observation. For instance, they state it positively as their opinion, that a locomotive engine of 10 horse-power, or say of the usual size, will not convey more than 10 tons, exclusive of the waggons, at the rate of 10 miles per hour in winter time, and in summer the same engine will take  $13\frac{1}{2}$  tons. The calculation is made on the assumption of the road being level. In answer to this statement, will you be kind enough to state at what speed *your own engine* returns from Stockton with a given number of empty waggons, and the rates of ascent? The whole ascent will do to get an average. State also at what speed the six-wheeled engine made by R. S. & Co. will return with any given number of waggons. What load, including waggons, will an engine weighing 9 tons, including water, take at the rate of 10 miles an hour on a level well-conditioned railway? Let it be understood that all your statements are made under the supposition that the speed is to be maintained for 20 or 30 miles without stopping, except for water. Let me have your general opinion as to the locomotive engine system. Is it as convenient as any other? Would you consider  $13\frac{1}{2}$  tons in summer, and 10 tons in winter, a fair performance for a good locomotive engine? You will oblige me much by answering the above questions as promptly as possible, as the discussion on the merits of the two systems is yet going on amongst the directors here."

By the highest authority within his reach, England's greatest railway engineer sought to fortify himself against the powerful opposition which sometimes threatened to overwhelm the pioneers of the system. In propounding these questions, he not only regarded the person to whom he wrote as one of fine natural parts and consummate skill,











but one also on whose opinion he could rely. How far he was justified in forming such an opinion will appear from the following letter, which was sent by Mr Hackworth in reply :—

“The statement you allude to,” he writes, “that a complete locomotive will take but 10 tons at 10 miles per hour, is quite at variance with facts : as an opinion merely, this I would forgive. Four of our waggons, laden for depots, frequently take from 12 to 13 tons of coals, exclusive of the waggons. Our engines never take less than 16 laden waggons in winter, and in summer from 20 to 24 and 32 laden, and can maintain a speed of 5 miles per hour, except in case of stoppages by means of horse waggons at the passing places. Engines thus loaded have frequently travelled at 9 miles per hour, sometimes more. It is unsafe to aim at speed upon a single line of railway ; the danger is at the passing places. I am verily convinced that a swift engine upon a well-conditioned railway will combine profit and simplicity, and will afford such facility as has not hitherto been known.

“I am well satisfied that an engine of the weight you mention will convey, on a level, in winter, 30 tons of goods 10 miles per hour, exclusive of carriages, and 40 tons in summer, exclusive of carriages. The six-wheeled engine fitted at the Company’s works generally takes 24 waggons, 53 cwt. to three tons of coal each, speed 5 miles per hour, empty waggons 24 cwt. each ; the six wheels by R. Stephenson & Co., 20 waggons 5 miles per hour, weight as above.

“As to my general opinion as to the *Locomotive System*, I believe it is comparatively in a state of infancy. Swift engines upon a double way, I am convinced, may be used to the utmost advantage. Improvements upon anything yet produced, of greater importance in all respects, are clearly practical ; and I am sure this will prove itself by actual remuneration to such parties as prudently, yet dili-



gently, pursue the execution of this kind of power, with their eyes open to those alterations and advantages which actual demonstration of local circumstances point out.

“*Stationary Engines* are by no means adapted to a public line of railway. I take here no account of a great waste of capital. But you will fail in proving to the satisfaction of any one not conversant with these subjects, the inexpediency of such a system. It never can do for coaching; passengers cannot be accommodated. If endless ropes are used, there will be both danger and delay. What provision can be made to answer the stretching of ropes? I have known a rope, a mile and a quarter long, stretch 70 fathoms in one day. What set of apparatus will be found practically applicable to give the rope proper tension? Admit it to be possible, who would dare to be near when a mass of matter standing at rest, say 20 to 30 tons, is first put in motion by a rope moving at the rate of 10 to 15 miles per hour? It need not be added what will follow—a scene of endless confusion!

“I hear the Liverpool company have concluded to use fixed engines. Some will look on this with surprise; but as you can well afford it, it is all for the good of the science and of the trade to try both plans. Do not discompose yourself, my dear sir: if you express your manly, firm, decided opinion, you have done your part as their adviser; and if it happen to be read some day in the newspaper, ‘Whereas the Liverpool and Manchester Railway has been strangled by ropes,’ we shall not accuse you of guilt in being accessory either before or after the fact.”

This letter illustrates Hackworth’s ability to gather together, as it were, the several parts of the railway system, and to present these in a comprehensive and distinct view. It exhibits his practical acquaintance with, and firm confidence in, the as yet undeveloped powers of the system; while it likewise wears much of the aspect of prophecy. Indeed, predictions were uttered by other men of those days, which



have frequently been cited as evidences of prescience, but, when contrasted with the intelligent, philosophical, and aptly-expressed sentiments of Hackworth, they cease to appear other than commonplace.

After a searching inquiry into the actual merits of the standing and travelling engines respectively, the surpassing excellence of the latter was acknowledged; but in order that the best-constructed locomotive might be obtained, a public competition was agreed upon, and a prize of £500 offered to the owner of the successful competitor. Accordingly, the conditions of the trial were announced, and entries for the same invited. At the place and time specified—at Rainhill, on the 1st October 1829—the following engines appeared, and were entered as follows :—

- I. *Novelty*, by Messrs Braithwaite & Ericsson.
- II. *Sanspareil*, by Mr Timothy Hackworth.
- III. *Rocket*, by Messrs R. Stephenson & Co.
- IV. *Perseverance*, by Mr Burstall.

After the delay of a few days, the trial took place. As is generally known, the prize was secured by the *Rocket*, and the adjudication was deemed to be a just one. Nor would we appear to dissent from the finding of the gentlemen who made the award, or to take exception to the common acclaim of those who witnessed the competition. On the contrary, we think the onerous duty of deciding upon the evidence adduced by the contest, was performed in the most conscientious and praiseworthy manner. Yet, when all the circumstances are fully considered, we are inclined to the opinion that the *Rocket* was not greatly superior to the *Sanspareil*. We are the more disposed to take this view of the matter, by reference to the subsequent history of the last-named engine. Mr Armstrong, in his work on “Steam-



Boilers," says, "The original *Sanspareil* of Mr Hackworth, which all but successfully competed for the prize at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, may still be seen regularly working on the Bolton and Leigh Railway, apparently not much worse for seven years' constant work, the boiler never having required any essential repair"—it was repaired after the date of the contest—"while its contemporary rivals, that have escaped the fate of the 'scrap heap,' have been re-made and mended over and over again since the celebrated race at Rainhill; a fact which goes far to prove that the principle of *this engine has not been so very much improved upon*, except that it is not so well calculated for burning coke as coal." It was, no doubt, unfortunate for Mr Hackworth that he could not himself, or under his own immediate supervision, build his trial-engine. The boiler was executed at the Bedlington Ironworks, and the cylinders were made by the Messrs Stephenson. But sufficient, we think, has been said to lead the reader to a proper view of the subject.

Disappointed yet not discomfited, Mr Hackworth returned from Rainhill to New Shildon, where he again entered with spirit into the duties of his office. Following the natural bias of his mind, we find him conceiving and successfully introducing other improvements, as opportunities for doing so presented themselves. The next notable locomotive—the *Globe*—which was placed upon the Stockton and Darlington Railway, exhibited the most marked progress in the science of engine-building. In its construction, the "crank-axle," worked by inside cylinders, and other approved alterations, were introduced, and these constituted her steam-generating powers superior to those of any other engine then in existence. With this engine the branch line between Middlesborough and Stockton was opened. The speed at which she could run was estimated



at fifty miles per hour. Thus, by successive efforts did he perfect the mechanism of the locomotive engine, securing thereby increased economy in fuel, and augmenting its speed to a wonderful degree. He also introduced elements of power and stability, which have raised the locomotive to the highest position as a mechanical invention used in the service of man. But these inventions, though remarkable creations of his intellect, were to be followed by more perfected productions of his genius. To meet the demand of the increase of traffic on the Stockton and Darlington Railway, in the year 1830, the directors resolved upon adding to the number of their locomotives. This resolution was not only consonant with their engineer's view of the case, but it furnished him with an opportunity for again displaying his vast powers of ingenuity. In pursuance of his object, he submitted for the adoption of the directors other important alterations in locomotive construction. His proposition having been sanctioned by the board, Mr Hackworth began to build the requisite number of engines after two distinct designs, both of which showed a thorough acquaintance with the requirements of the railway, as well as great skill in mechanical engineering. Indeed, the locomotives, when completed, not only answered the end for which they had been designed, but exceeded in point of efficiency the calculations of the engineer. An evidence of their excellent construction and remarkable durability is found in the fact that, after a lapse of nearly twenty years, one of the agents of the railway, on which they had been in constant use, said regarding them, "Take them weight for weight, they surpass any engine on the line."

By the greatness of his talents, and the keen penetration which was reflected in his professional efforts, we are instinctively led to claim for him one of the highest places amongst the inventors of this or of any other country;



having not only conceived the more notable features in the mechanism which communicates driving power to the locomotive, but by successive experiments, founded on practical experience, brought the engine to an admitted state of perfection. In reviewing his history as an engineer, therefore, we cannot fail to be arrested by the thought of his having conquered difficulties by the force of his own intellectual energies and the strength of his moral courage. Let him be judged by the amount and value of his labours, and Timothy Hackworth will appear to the mechanical student of our day as no ordinary man.

Hitherto we have referred to the more remarkable achievements of his life, such as *the invention of the Blast-Pipe, the introduction of the Crank-Axle, the insertion of the Short-Stroke Pump, and improved Heating Surface*, with their accompanying advantages; but many contrivances were devised by him to meet the pressing wants that were ever and anon experienced in the working of the traffic. Of these, the Double-acting Drum was not the least important. By the old drum, placed at the top of the Brusselton Incline, only one line of rails could be worked at a time, and that was a slow and difficult task, for the rope, when unattended, did not coil equably on the cylinder. But by the new erection—"two drums on one horizontal shaft"—both lines could be worked at one and the same time, the ropes naturally winding themselves upon the machine: thus ensuring more speed and larger traffic, with greater safety. The Etherley Incline, like the Brusselton, is a double one, but differs from the other in that, the two sides of the hill on which it is formed are unequal in length. In the "drum" erected on the summit of the eminence, further improvement was effected. By its use both rails were not only worked simultaneously, but the momentum of the laden waggons, as they descended the longer bank, hauled a train



of others up the shorter side of the hill, without receiving aid from the stationary engine. Besides fixing the above appliances, the first of the kind laid down on any railway, other mechanical efforts were made by him as necessity required. From his hand came the design of "the Switch;" at his instance was made "the Dog" or "Discharge Book," "the Cow" or "Drag-Frame;" while in the Auckland coal-field, in which many extensive collieries were then being opened, his engineering skill and inventive capacity were employed in reconstructing old, and in creating new, methods of hauling, some of which may yet be seen in that important mining district. Wherever, indeed, new machinery was required, in the erection of which much constructive genius was essential, Mr Hackworth brought those commanding abilities that ever made him equal to the occasion. Thus was he of signal service to the projectors of the Coal-Staiths at Middlesborough. In 1829 the Stockton and Darlington Railway Company resolved upon the erection of these staiths; and for the purpose of securing the most able designs, they instituted a public competition, offering, as an inducement to engineers to compete, prizes of one hundred and fifty, and seventy-five, guineas. Mr Hackworth's plan, estimate, and section, were presented in terms of the advertisement, and being pronounced by the judges to be the most skilful productions, he was awarded the first prize.

Five years subsequent to the above date, his relation to the railway company by whom he was employed, underwent a very important change. Hitherto he had acted in the capacity of resident engineer, and for the discharge of his important duties received a stated salary. In his new position, however, he contracted with the directors for the haulage of the entire traffic, reserving to himself the liberty of acting professionally for others who might desire his services. To the conditions of his contract he adhered with



characteristic faithfulness ; while to his private custom, which steadily increased, he gave the most diligent attention. This successful enterprise, in course of time, led to more extended operations ; for he had not filled the twofold position of contractor and manufacturer more than six years, when he determined upon opening an establishment of his own. Accordingly, in 1840, we find him leaving the service of the Stockton and Darlington Railway Company—a service of fifteen years' duration—and assuming the proprietorship of the Soho Engine Works, Shildon. Here he continued to exhibit those sterling qualities, surpassing abilities, and singular graces which adorned alike the man, the inventor, and the Christian. His success was truly surprising, but not less remarkable was the laborious industry which gave form, and strength, and beauty to his character. With incessant mental application he addressed himself to the study of the locomotive, until he had mastered the details of every successive experiment. With tenacity of purpose he pursued the grand idea of his life, and surmounted each successive difficulty as it appeared before him ; while with extraordinary address he solved the question of the age—the superiority of stationary or locomotive engines.

It is not, however, in his ceaseless exertions alone that we discover the source of his prosperity and happiness. He was a man of principle ; his character had been moulded by the precepts of the sacred page. In words that might be fitly inscribed in letters of gold, the mainspring of his actions may be thus defined :—“ Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you.” It was from this centre that those pleasant ripples rose, which, spreading over the surface of his life, lent a charm and a sanctity to his existence. The home of his boyhood witnessed the tenderest manifestation of his affectionate nature, as he sedulously endeavoured to soothe the grief of his widowed



parent. The place of his sojourn in early manhood beheld its almost miraculous effects, as with "faith that sweetly works by love," he pleaded with Jehovah, until the drunkard was reclaimed, and the sick unto death was restored to health. His dwelling-place in the noontide of his life and fame enjoyed its benignant influence, for with "the words of love" did he gather the people together, and declare unto them the goodness and mercy of God in Christ. But at home, more than elsewhere, did he strictly observe and prudently enforce "the golden rule," as the one most fitted to secure and diffuse a foretaste of heaven upon earth ; and in all this Timothy Hackworth himself was, of all others, pre-eminently benefited, for in his own happy experience did he realise the fulfilment of the promise, "He that watereth shall be watered himself."

In his engineering establishment at Shildon, Mr Hackworth continued to labour with unabated vigour, and, as occasion served, made several experiments, especially with the "rotatory engine" and "iron-smelting;" but he had scarcely had sufficient time to profit by the outlay of his capital, or to reap the fruits of an active, industrious life, when the term of his existence was brought to a close. About the middle of the year 1850, signs of weakness and decay manifested themselves ; nevertheless he continued till within a fortnight of his death to attend to his daily duties. On the morning of the 28th June 1850, he conducted, as usual, the devotional service of the household, entering "into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." In his exercises upon that occasion he experienced a sweet yet solemn sense of his acceptance with God, while those who bent with him at the family altar felt the overshadowings of the Divine presence. After he had partaken of breakfast he felt unwell and returned to his bed-chamber ; while symptoms of an alarming nature gradually appearing, it became painfully evident to the family



that the sands of the hour-glass of his earthly life had nearly run. Yet at this crisis his faith was strong in God. The religion which he had embraced in the days of his youth, and by which he had been supported in his riper years, was to him now as a strong pillar, which death even could not shatter. The earthly tabernacle was already tottering to its fall, but the spirit, firmly trusting in the atonement of Christ, and sanctified by "the blood of sprinkling," was filled with holy exultation. Heaven, it would seem, came near to earth, and made the chamber where the dying saint of God lay a hallowed place. One day he observed to a friend, "I have had a glorious manifestation ; the Lord is very kind ; it is in this way He prepares me for some trial that is to come." While suffering under the most excruciating pain he would often exclaim—

" Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,  
Till the storm of life be past :  
Safe into the haven guide ;  
O receive my soul at last."

Throughout the time of his mortal illness, the traits of his estimable character were brought into conspicuous prominence. Gratitude and praise lingered upon his lips, and his soul was supremely happy in the Lord his God. Sensitive to the affectionate and unremitting kindness of his children, he would remark, "Thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord ;" and with a heart overflowing with parental affection would he pray, "Lord, do Thou be father, and mother, and all, to my dear family, for Christ's sake, Amen, Amen." Thus, surrounded by his loved ones, and with an immortal hope which he had "as an anchor cast within the veil," did he finish his course. At the close of an earthly Sabbath-day, the 7th July 1850, Timothy Hackworth entered upon the Sabbath of eternity. When the mournful tidings of his



death were announced, sorrow reigned throughout the district, while, as a last tribute of esteem and regard, multitudes followed the funeral procession to the place of interment. Few of those who assembled on the occasion of his burial could restrain their tears of grief, while one desire was felt by many in that vast concourse of mourners :—" Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

In the career just sketched, there is a consistency that attracts and absorbs our attention. Religion and business were to him not antagonistic forces, but close companions and inseparable friends. Godliness sanctified his secular duties. When the rays of his life's history have been gathered into one focus, we discover a well-defined illustration of the axiom, "The Christian is the highest style of man." While on the one hand he was an ardent student of nature and a patient investigator of the laws by which her elements are governed, he was, on the other hand, an exemplary and devoted Methodist, consecrating much of his time, his talents, and his substance to the cause of religion and godliness. Nor was the exercise of his profession in any way obstructive to the duties of his spiritual calling. On the contrary, the knowledge gained by him in the pursuit of his temporal business, frequently enabled him to illustrate the doctrines of Free Grace by the most apt similitudes. His firm adherence to the Divine commandment, even to the loss of the means of his subsistence, was not derogatory to his advancement in the world ; neither did his advocacy of the claims of religion upon the attention of his fellow-men, after he had attained to professional distinction, form a hindrance to his success in that arduous vocation with which his life was worthily identified. Blended judiciously, his religious and secular duties conspired to elevate his character, to exalt his worldly posi-



tion, and to immortalise his memory, without robbing him of temporary preference. If at any period of his life his manly qualities and Christian graces were subjected to the contumely and hurtfulness of the deceitful, the injurious, or the unprincipled, he was fully justified by the thorough consciousness of having done or intended what was strictly honourable and right.



THOMAS BUSH.

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IN Eastern countries, the practice of presenting gifts to monarchs and other exalted personages, upon particular occasions, has been recognised from the earliest ages of their history. At one time, indeed, it was considered an act of the gravest character to approach an Oriental sovereign without bringing a present, as a tangible manifestation of respect, submission, or reverence towards kingly majesty and greatness. Those voluntary tributes varied in value according to the station of him who sought an audience or interview. From the rich much was expected and received ; from the poor the humblest offerings were frequently accepted. Custom gave to the practice all the force and importance of legislative statutes ; while advantage was taken of the opportunities it afforded to display the wealth, refinement, or luxurious tastes of the more highly favoured donors. In the Jewish Church and nation, the dedication to God of a portion of the worldly substance of the people was observed in obedience to the Divine command, while it was systematised in accordance with Levitical law. The First-fruits were offered at the Temple as a symbolic acknowledgment by the Hebrews that the God of Israel was the supreme Ruler over all, and that to Him the nation was indebted for every favour received and every blessing enjoyed. The Levitical statutes, however, neither prescribed the *time* when such offerings were to be made by individuals, nor the *quantity* of grain or of fruit which



was to be presented before the Lord, in token of personal gratitude for temporal mercies. It is true that Rabbinical writers have declared the proportionate amount of the First-fruits to be one-sixtieth part of the whole harvest of wheat, barley, apricots, olives, dates, figs, or grapes gathered by any family or household ; but, we are assured, much was left in this respect to the conscientious option of each proprietor of the fields, orchards, and vineyards of Canaan. In like manner, the devotion and zeal of the early Christian converts were shown in the giving of their substance in free-will offerings to the apostles, for the general purposes of the Church of Christ ; while in subsequent times, the progress of Christianity has been prominently marked by the righteous self-denial and philanthropic generosity of the followers of the Prophet of Nazareth. When compared with the benevolence of the religion of Jesus, the liberality of philosophical asceticism sinks into utter insignificance. Abundant evidence of this is furnished by the history of Wesleyan Methodism ; not alone in the systematic contributions of her children for purposes of good, but also in the spontaneous offerings of her sons and daughters, and the consecration of their means to the temporal benefit and eternal welfare of their brethren. In the life of the Lay-Preacher whose piety and usefulness is about to engage our attention, we have a noble illustration of the reality and power of Christian philanthropy. Wealth was to him a sacred trust from his Divine Master, and his stewardship was signally faithful and unreservedly just. His character forms a model of religious excellence, and its delineation, even in the most commonplace manner, is fitted to evoke a spirit of emulation in those who are most indifferent and lukewarm in their feelings and conduct towards the cause of the Gospel.

Thomas Bush was born at Letcombe-Regis, a village



situate a few miles from the town of Wantage, in Berkshire. His father—after whom he was named—was a farmer in opulent circumstances, and a native of the neighbouring village of Childrey, to which place the mother of Thomas also belonged. At the birth of their son, on the 11th October 1786, Mr and Mrs Bush resided on a farm at Letcombe-Regis, formerly part of a royal demesne, from which fact probably the name was derived. Ere he had attained his tenth year, death deprived the boy of the paternal care and solicitude which had watched over his infancy, but his mother proved herself to be eminently capable of shielding her son from the hardships to which their common bereavement naturally exposed him. His educational training was entrusted to Mr Jennings, the principal of a middle-class school in the town of Wantage. It would appear that young Thomas Bush received every attention at the hands of his preceptor, who instructed him in what was then considered the requirements of a sound education. At no period of his life, however, could he be considered more than a fair English scholar ; although, it should be noted, he possessed a richly cultivated intellect through careful reading and studious observation. Her husband having purchased an estate at Lamborne, about seven miles from his farm, Mrs Bush removed to that place when her only son was about fourteen years of age. She was a woman of strong sense, industrious and economical habits, with a warm disposition and kindly nature, but too much cumbered and engrossed with worldly matters. It is true that she outwardly complied with the observances of religion, and endeavoured to instil into the mind of her son, whom she fervently loved, the principles of morality and rectitude ; this, however, without being animated by the spirit of vital godliness. The main-spring of her actions in general, and her bearing towards



her child, proceeded from a keen sense of the duties of propriety and the requirements of respectability. Thomas revered his mother, and to him her every wish was law. He yielded to her authority with all the pliability of youth, but without the waywardness which sometimes disfigures the endearing relationship between offspring and parent. Naturally of a cheerful disposition, he indulged in the sports and pastimes peculiar to his age and sex, but showed no inherent inclination towards unhealthy excitement or questionable pursuits. The widow indeed was blessed in her son, and the affection which subsisted between them was strong and enduring.

When Thomas was about eleven years old, Wesleyan practices and doctrines were introduced into Lamborne, mainly through the instrumentality of an old Local Preacher named Spanswick, who resided at the adjacent village of Eastbury. The services at first were held in the room of a cottage which was inhabited by Elizabeth Bowsher, a poor woman who rendered up her humble abode as a tabernacle for the Most High. That God honoured the sacrifice made for His honour and glory by the peasant, is evidenced by the fact that the cause of truth and holiness prospered exceedingly, and that "old Betty Bowsher's" habitation was soon found incapable of accommodating all the worshippers who sought to enter it on the Lord's Day. To meet this emergency, an outbuilding attached to the cottage was repaired, enlarged, and fitted up as a Preaching-house. Thus what had been used as a storehouse for fuel became a Methodist Chapel, wherein the flame of Divine love burned brightly for several years. A more modern building was afterwards erected upon the same ground by the Wesleyan Society there, and the structure, while it served the higher purpose of drawing together the people of God for mutual fellowship and instruction in righteousness, could



not but be regarded as a noble memorial of the piety, zeal, and faithfulness of one who was numbered among the poorest of God's believing children. In the year 1805, the Lamborne Society formed part of the Newbury Circuit, which was then under the charge of the Rev. Robert Wheeler, a faithful minister of the truth, whose labours were blessed in the conversion of many souls. While engaged in preaching the Gospel one evening at Lamborne, Mr Wheeler's attention was attracted by the singular appearance in the crowded chapel of a man attired in full hunting uniform, accompanied by a number of dissolute associates. The Preacher at once recognised the person to be Mr Martin, a well-known fox-hunter of the locality, who, although moving in highly respectable society, gave up much of his time to the service of Satan and the companionship of drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, and blasphemers. Instinctively apprehending danger from the furtive glances which passed from Martin to the men who had accompanied him to the house of God, Mr Wheeler abruptly terminated his discourse, and asked the congregation to join with him in prayer to the Almighty, that the hearts of the thoughtless and disobedient might be turned from evil, and touched as with a live-coal from the altar of Infinite Grace. Martin had filled the pockets of his hunting-coat with stones, intending therewith to pelt the minister and congregation; but the prayers of God's people, applied by the Holy Spirit, softened the man's obduracy, and turned his hatred into fear. As Mr Wheeler earnestly pleaded at the throne of God on his behalf, Martin felt as if the stones he carried would drag him to perdition. One by one the missiles were dropped upon the floor; the arrows of conviction entered the seared conscience of the man of the world; and awakened concern for his immortal soul led him to seek the mercy which he had formerly despised. That mercy was eventually obtained by him; and,



changed in character and pursuits from that memorable night, he who had carried deadly weapons into the camp of the Lord, became himself a soldier of the Cross, and an attached member of the Methodist Society,—a Christian community which had previously been the object of his ridicule, contempt, and hostility.

The conversion of Mr Martin, and his becoming a Methodist in faith and practice, startled many of his friends and acquaintances who had never countenanced his open wickedness, while those who had been his companions in evil treated his religious professions with sarcastic derision. With the family at North Farm he was on terms of intimacy; and Mr Tame, the brother of Mrs Bush, who resided with her, and Thomas, her son, frequently rallied their friend upon the “oddities” of Methodism. The latter gentleman, however, submitted to the banter of the former with Christian fortitude and patience, while he occasionally gave them incontestable reasons for clinging to the faith which he had embraced. But the great change which had operated upon the life and character of Mr Martin was destined to bring the blessings of salvation within the reach of others besides himself; and the conversion of Thomas Bush was one of its most important results. Thomas, as we have seen, was of a kindly disposition, and he had naturally a strong aversion to profanity or other open wickedness. He attended to the outward observances of religion, but he was in his youth a stranger to the inward power of Divine grace. If he indulged in card-playing, or any other questionable amusement, the fault lay perhaps more with the customs of the society in which he moved, than with himself. But “old things” were to pass away from him; all things were to become “new.” When he had attained the age of nineteen, a severe illness struck him down, as he looked with fond anticipations upon his majority, which a few short months



would bring to him. The world, with the fancied pleasures which wealth can procure, seemed to be receding from his grasp just as he was about to become the uncontrolled possessor of a considerable estate, and the holder of no mean position in society. But his sickness was "not unto death," and convalescence at last gave him hopes of prolonged life and enjoyment. Still these expectations did not bring peace to his soul. A deep anxiety had been aroused within his breast, which all the fleeting pleasures of time could not allay. He asked himself the question, "What have I done *for God* since I was born?" Conscience answered, "Nothing!" Alarmed about the issue of his bodily weakness and spiritual destitution, he sought a calmer frame of mind by giving more attention than he had hitherto done to religious exercises; but his uneasiness increased rather than diminished. While engaged in the garden one day, and brooding over his want of happiness and inward felicity, Mr Martin happened to pass near. The believing Christian, from past experience, expected Thomas to indulge in some flippant remarks about Methodism. Great was his astonishment to find, therefore,—instead of a jocular expression directed towards himself,—his advice eagerly sought for upon a matter involving the ruin or salvation of an immortal soul. Proceeding to the house, and being closeted together, Thomas unburdened himself in some measure of his weight of anxiety, by describing to his friend the feelings he endured: his fears, disappointments, and cravings after happiness. Martin, with a heart overflowing with gratitude to God for giving him an opportunity for usefulness, proposed that the guidance of the Lord should first be sought. Kneeling together, he who had already found the Saviour besought Him to make His grace sufficient for the wants of the awakened sinner who longed for peace. After prayer, Martin urged his friend to lay hold upon the "hope" set



before him "in the Gospel," and affectionately invited him to come to the Methodist chapel. Pride for a time struggled against the counsel of his spiritual adviser, but at last better reason prevailed, and he went with Martin for the first time to the humble house of meeting of a despised Christian Society. Entering the chapel, he endeavoured to conceal himself behind one of the pillars which supported the roof of the building, and waited, with a feeling akin to shame, for the service to begin. All considerations regarding the novelty of the position in which he found himself were soon lost sight of as the congregation joined in singing the opening hymn, four lines of which arrested and absorbed his attention. The words were—

" But all, before they hence remove,  
May mansions for themselves prepare  
In that eternal house above :  
And, O my God, shall I be there ?"

In vain did Thomas try to shut out from his mind the feeling of intense awe which the lines inspired. "*Shall I be there?*" seemed to be a question which had been suddenly imprinted on his conscience in letters of fire. Now did he find that his former religion was spiritless and dead. Now did he discover that his "own righteousness" was but as "filthy rags." But kind friends led him to the foot of the Cross ; and, while beholding by faith the agonies of the Crucified One as having been endured on his account, the burden of his guilt was removed, and he rejoiced in the light of the Sun of Righteousness.

After much wrestling with God in prayer, his natural pride became subdued, and Thomas Bush was admitted to the membership of the Wesleyan Connexion. This was about the year 1806, and when he was twenty years of age. The Methodist Society at Lamborne was then small as to its numbers, and mean in the eyes of the world by reason of



the poverty of the majority of those who were identified with it. It required, therefore, very strong motives to induce a person in affluent circumstances to become a member of this despised Church of Christ. But the faith which had brought the subject of this sketch "out of darkness into light," was sufficiently vigorous and healthy to enable him to conquer "the flesh with its affections and lusts." Consequently, we find him, a few months after his conversion, following the remains of a poor brother-believer to the grave, heedless of the animadversions of those who occupied a similar station in life to his own. At another time, and in the open street, he held the reins of an Itinerant Preacher's horse, not ashamed to avow publicly his connection with the Wesleyan Society. Still had he, too, his cross to bear at home. The farm being under the management of his uncle, Mr Tame, Thomas was much under the control of his mother's brother in matters connected with the business, and that gentleman frequently took occasion to lecture his nephew upon the "heinousness" of the sin of "dissent." The latter bore meekly the opposition to which he was subjected by his relative, and endeavoured in a kindly way to disarm unwarranted prejudice, by addressing his uncle in writing upon the subject of their disagreement. That communication was afterwards considered to be so excellent and to the point, that copies of it were read at various Society-meetings held at a distance from the village at which the principal parties concerned resided. Opposition, therefore, only served the purpose of nerving his hand and strengthening his heart in the cause of true religion. His decision for Christ became, through the presence of obstacles, more determined and conspicuous. Nor did the alteration in the life and motives of her son fail in arousing in Mrs Bush a concern for her own eternal security. As we have already seen, they were bound to each other by mutual sympathy and affection,



and with all a fond mother's pride she had watched the physical and intellectual progress of her son, who was now merging into manhood. It was with painful feelings, as may well be conceived, that Mrs Bush viewed the estrangement of one she so dearly loved from the Church of his fathers. But such feelings were happily followed by self-examination, and consideration of certain arguments which had been adduced by her son in favour of the scriptural authority that gave, in his estimation, countenance and encouragement to the Methodists to persevere in the course they had adopted, though such was contrary to the teaching of the Church of England. Gradually but surely was the mother weaned, as her son had been, from trusting in outward ordinances, until, animated by the same bright hopes, and cheered by the love of the same God and Saviour, she also cast in her lot with "the meek of the earth." Thus was he made instrumental in furthering the "new birth" of one to whom, in the providence of God, he owed his natural being.

\* As may well be conceived by those who are at all acquainted with Christian experience and the benefits to be derived from Christian fellowship, the faith of Thomas Bush and his mother received confirmation and strength from their mutual intercourse. Their religious convictions became also deepened and enlarged by communion with others. Of these, one may be named as having been, under God, the means of much spiritual consolation and encouragement to Mrs Bush and her son. Mrs Pottinger, the holy woman referred to, had been for a number of years as "a light shining in a dark place," and was, moreover, one of the Leaders of the little Wesleyan Community at Lamborne. The following summary of her estimable qualities and usefulness is from the pen of Mr Bush :—"A very striking feature in her character was her zeal and concern for the



prosperity of Zion. This, next to her own growth in grace, lay nearest her heart. For this she laboured, fasted, and prayed incessantly. I am witness to some of the many prayers, groans, and tears, she poured out to God for the universal Church, and still more for our own Connexion, the Society, and her own Class. To my knowledge, she frequently set apart days of private fasting and prayer for the prosperity of the Church of God ; and this was her usual custom when any of the Society, more particularly her own Class, had dishonoured their profession, or were backsliding in heart, or under the power of temptation." With such a counsellor, and with such a bright example of holy principle and practice before their eyes, the members of the Church in that Berkshire hamlet prospered exceedingly in their souls, and none more so than Thomas Bush and his parent. Their piety was augmented, their faith was invigorated, their zeal was quickened ; while their love to Christ, to His people, and to sinners, received fresh impulses and ardour from daily communion with the pure heart and earnest spirit of Mrs Pottinger. As "iron sharpeneth iron," so did they become better fitted for usefulness in the world, by coming frequently into contact with the devoted self-denial, sanctity, and faithfulness of one who was truly a "mother in Israel." Thus was our subject incited to employ his talents and his means in the service of the Gospel.

He was appointed to the office of Class-Leader about the year 1810, and shortly after admitted to the Lay-Ministry of the Wesleyan Connexion. In both of these highly important spheres of Christian labour he proved himself to be a faithful and zealous servant of God. As a Preacher, he sought the honour of his Master rather than the praise of men. He sedulously endeavoured rightly to divide the bread of life, so that each of his hearers might receive their "meat in due season." But his discourses could not be termed elo-



quent addresses, in the popular acceptation of the term. Rather might they be considered lucid expositions of the will of God to man, and affectionate encouragements to the vilest of sinners to return from following after wickedness, assured of pardon, peace, and love, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Little time was allowed by him to elapse before he set about extending the blessings of redemption to other villages besides the one to which he more immediately belonged. Childrey, the birthplace of his parents, was among the first places which he visited in the capacity of a Preacher of the Gospel. His companion upon that occasion was Mr Mitchell, a Lay-brother who had been signally useful in the cause of the Gospel; and from a waggon borrowed for the purpose, Thomas Bush "preached repentance and the forgiveness of sins." Through the kindness of a farmer named Bunce, accommodation was given for the public services of the Methodists at Childrey, and Thomas was rewarded for his labours by forming a Society there, as the result of his special efforts on behalf of sinners. Persecution soon attempted, however, to obliterate the good impressions which had been made upon many hearts through his instrumentality. The clergyman of the parish raised an interdict against two of the persons who had aided Thomas in the work, but, after the most strenuous exertions having been put forth to effect his purpose, the attempt to close the mouths of God's servants signally failed. First, the Magistrates, at the instance of the clerical prosecutor, declared "public praying" to be unlawful on the part of any person who had not been "licensed to preach," and "William Kent and William Franklin were fined in the sum of *twenty pounds each*." Then, an appeal being made to the Quarter-Sessions, a jury decided against the Methodists, and confirmed the prohibitory finding of the Magistrates. But proceedings were instantly instituted in the Court of King's Bench;



and, after spending a considerable portion of his time and means, Thomas Bush had the satisfaction of knowing, on the highest legal authority, that not even a clergyman of the Established Church could prevent the Wesleyans from preaching or praying in accordance with the dictates of their consciences.

Between the years 1811 and 1815, he was zealously employed in the work of publishing "tidings of peace and goodwill towards men." During that period the standard of Methodism was unfurled by him in various places within the borders of his native county; while his purse-strings were at all seasons unloosed on behalf of any really meritorious object. About the last-mentioned year he retired from business, and consecrated his energies solely to the cause of Christ. As an illustration of his motives in so doing, we quote his own words on the subject:—"When I gave up business, I gave up myself to be in spirit a Traveling Preacher—*i.e.*, to be entirely devoted to God in body, soul, spirit, income, influence, and every other talent. O God! ordain me for special spiritual service for Thee, in the Church and in the world, for Christ's sake. Amen and Amen." His ruling passion was love—love to God, love to the brethren, love to immortal souls. Such was the sacred principle that ruled all his schemes of action, and gave force and energy to his public ministrations. As an ambassador of the King of kings, he visited numerous places, many of which were at a considerable distance from each other. In what is now the Hungerford, Swindon, and Wantage Circuits, the truths he proclaimed were applied with power to many consciences; and while sinners were converted to God, saints were built up in their most holy faith through his means, under the Divine influence and blessing. About this time, also, Methodist services were introduced into the village of Letcombe-Bassett: a



work to which he lent a willing spirit and a helping hand. His first sermon at Letcombe—an able exposition of the Lord's Prayer, that called forth much thoughtful conversation among the people—was preached from the footboard of a gig. This service was succeeded by others, which were held in a cottage, until a commodious little chapel was built, principally at the expense of the Preacher. This was the first house of God which Thomas Bush erected—the first-fruits of a plan of usefulness to which his life and his substance were faithfully devoted. "My call," he observed upon one occasion, "is to collect a few sheep in the wilderness, and then to build a fold in which to shelter them." That he effected this purpose in a remarkable manner we shall presently show; but, before doing so, circumstances connected with his bodily health demand our attention.

On his retirement from business, it was generally supposed that he would enter the Christian Ministry: at any rate, many of his friends earnestly urged him to do so. But, either from his own inclination, or the wish of his mother, he decided to follow the humbler path of an Evangelist. Certainly the position of a Lay-Preacher was calculated to give him more time and opportunity for carrying out effectually objects which lay very near to his heart—the employment of his talents in the work of preaching the Gospel, and the dedication of his available property to the cause of Christ. A severe physical malady, however, threatened to frustrate a portion of his commendable scheme. Acute illness and bodily prostration left him almost totally devoid of the power of speech; and for many years the affliction remained as "a thorn in the flesh," to humble and impress him with a deep sense of the vanity of human life. Often did he beseech the Lord to remove the cause of sore trial. His Heavenly Father, however, willed it otherwise; and, in answer to his supplications, directed him to the fountain of



grace, which is alone sufficient to impart full satisfaction to the longings of His children. His speech, it is true, was at various times partially restored, and he was enabled to preach, upon rare occasions, after the bronchial affection first attacked him; but he was reluctantly compelled to desist from an exercise in which he greatly delighted, and by which he had done great service to the interests of Methodism and the Gospel. He met his Class regularly, however, and what he wished to say to individual members of it was written by him on a slate, which he usually carried about with him. The ideas thus communicated were frequently very striking, and invariably appropriate to the circumstances which called them forth. Thus, although he was deprived to a large extent of the power of audible utterance, he possessed two instruments of usefulness which were ever ready in case of need—his wealth and the ability to write. Our space will not permit us to give more than one or two extracts from his written correspondence with his brethren in Christ, but these will serve to show the high-souled principles that guided him in the discharge of his duties towards the Church of which he was an honoured member and office-bearer, and the affectionate solicitude which he at all times manifested towards those over whom he was placed as a Leader in faith and practice. Writing on the 18th March 1817 to the Rev. T. Webb, who had previously been located in the Hungerford Circuit, he said, “I most sincerely wish I could give you a better account both of myself and the cause of God in this Circuit. Yet I am thankful to say my face is still Zionward. I feel strong desires to be wholly and unreservedly devoted to God; that all my tempers and conduct may be so regulated by Divine grace as to bring glory to God, and be an honour to His precious cause. I want a closer union with Jesus Christ by living faith. When the heavenly principle within is lively



and vigorous, then our tempers are Christ-like, our conversation spiritual, and our conduct that of a disciple of Christ. When our venerable father, the truly Rev. John Wesley, first sent Preachers to Scotland, he was aware it would be but little use to send any but those who were deeply devoted to God, and who preached a full, free, and present salvation—insisting much on experimental religion. And why? Because Scotland was almost deluged with doctrinal light. I sometimes think England is, in a general way, in the same state—deluged with doctrinal light, so that a Preacher is not half so much likely to be useful now as forty or fifty years ago, with the same grace and talents. Preachers in our day will be of very little use except they are deeply devoted to God, and in their preaching enter into the inward feeling of experience, and insist on a full and present salvation. I am astonished to see old professors return from sermons with as much unconcern as though the subject of the discourse were a mathematical problem, only to be received into the understanding, instead of being embraced with the will and affections, and digested and converted into living food for the soul to feed on, and grow thereby into the Divine likeness. Religion is a reasonable thing—infinately reasonable; but it is, at the same time, *spiritual*, and should pass through the understanding into the heart, and from thence to practice, in all our intercourse with men and things, or it is but little worth. I am well aware my dear brother has often had thoughts similar to the above; and if they are properly weighed, will have a tendency to drive us from formality, and be a means of making us unreservedly devoted to God. The devil will fight for his kingdom, and when he stirs up his faithful servants to persecute, we may expect the Lord is about to do some good amongst the people. We have had a singular and daring instance of persecution in our Circuit. Wroughton



Chapel is burned down to the ground—pulpit, Bible, and all. There is little or no doubt but it was wickedly and maliciously set on fire by the devil's agents. You know it underwent a repair not long ago; and, what added seriously to the loss, it was not insured. I believe they preach on the ruins when the weather will permit. Now we are fired out, if I were our Preachers, I certainly would go into the heart of the place, on the hill, and sound an alarm on that unholy mountain."

The following is from a letter written by him to a friend in London; and, while it contains good, practical advice upon the duties of a Class-Leader, is a reflection of his thoughtful regard for, and faithful attention to, the spiritual interests of the members of his own Class:—"I have long viewed the office of a Class-Leader as one of the greatest importance; and I am fully persuaded that the revival or decay of practical piety depends much, under God, on the Class-Leaders in our Connexion. In every Society, where the Leaders are men of deep piety and sound judgment in the things of God, the souls committed to their charge will, through their instrumentality, be kept from resting in a form of godliness on the one hand, and from evil-speaking, contentions, and divisions on the other. Let it then, in the first place, be your earnest desire and care to keep the intercourse clear between God and your own soul. . . . In speaking of conviction of sin, the drawings of the Father, the witness of the Spirit, the inestimable privileges of those who are born of God, every Methodist Class-Leader ought to say, with John, 'We speak that we do know, and testify that which we have (spiritually) seen.' And it is exceedingly desirable that a Leader should be able to testify, from his own experience, that 'perfect love casteth out (all slavish) fear;' to say, in the full sense of the word, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I



now live is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.' . . . Those who experience perfect love have clear views of themselves, the Holy Scriptures, the devices of Satan, the realities of the eternal world, and, above all, of the infinite willingness and ability of Jesus Christ to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by Him. Such more feelingly yearn over their charge in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and are likely to be much more useful in leading penitents to the Lamb of God, and in building up believers in their most holy faith. . . . Always endeavour, as far as in you lies, to give the trumpet *a certain sound*—to give to all *their* 'meat in due season.' Endeavour to represent to all their proper state as clearly as you possibly can. We are in danger of letting penitents, or persons awakened more or less, rest with confused notions of getting holy, &c., without immediately directing them to the Lamb of God, and a free, full, and present salvation, through faith in His blood. The consequence of letting awakened characters rest in a confused state is, they either struggle on a long time in a dark, perplexed, and uncomfortable way—not living to the glory of God and overcoming the world and sin, as they would be able to do under the influence of living faith and the witness of the Spirit—or, on the other hand, they sink back again into spiritual insensibility, and in time of temptation fall away, or continue in a lifeless form with their hearts unregenerate. . . . And, before those who have believed with their hearts unto righteousness, endeavour to set the peculiar glory of the Gospel dispensation: press on their renewed hearts the privilege and necessity of having fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. . . . Those who live near to God escape very many temptations, by which the unfaithful and lukewarm are frequently attacked, and too often overcome. If believers are not encouraged



to go on to perfection, they often sink, little by little, into the spirit of the world, which, if not detected and strove against, will lead them to adopt its customs and fashions—to associate with the men of the world, until little of their religion is left, except a systematic creed in their head, and an outward attendance on the means of grace in their conduct. Oh, how important is the office you and I sustain in the Church of Christ! How awfully responsible are we both to Christ and to His Church! May we from this time be more faithful!”

As we have already seen, Thomas Bush entertained a high estimate of the duty of Christian benevolence; and in the plans he adopted to carry out his beneficent wishes, he proved himself to be, in heart and action, *a Methodist*. Heavy affliction did not sour his nature, neither did it prevent his zeal for God to occupy a second place in his thoughts and purposes. Although prevented, in the providence of God, from teaching the truth by his voice, he felt that there was no barrier in the way to hinder the manifestation of the truth in his life and conduct. That he *lived the Gospel* which he had preached to others, is attested by a solemn covenant which he made to his Maker, and which also he strictly observed to the latest day of his pilgrimage on earth. Ascending, one day, an eminence called White Horse Hill, about the year 1820, he gazed upon the fertile plain which lay stretched before him. Saddening thoughts filled his mind, as he considered that at his feet dwelt multitudes who could not claim any interest in the atonement of Christ—men and women who were passing to eternity, heedless alike of happiness and of misery. True, there were watchmen appointed for the purpose of warning these thoughtless ones against the dangers of the path on which they journeyed; but the counsel, he believed, was misleading and unsafe. No sooner did the magnitude of



the evil present itself forcibly to his imagination, than he determined to do what in him lay to mitigate, and, if possible, remove it. Animated by a lively faith and holy love, he committed himself and the cause he had espoused to God. The following record of the circumstance was noted by himself:—"On White Horse Hill I solemnly and unalienably made an entire surrender of body, soul, substance, time, influence, and talent of every kind, to Thee as my Triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and I took that whole District as my special vineyard." An extract from the covenant itself will show its scope and the devoted piety and zeal which called it forth:—"I will lay out my yearly income faithfully for Thee—if not in the same year, yet uprightly and faithfully. And if Thou sparest me to pursue the great work in the Vale of the White Horse, *I will plant the Gospel, and purchase premises, and erect Preaching-houses, and settle them on the Conference Plan, without selfish reserves.* I will not lend my *yearly income* on interest, but will honestly lay it up for the cause of God. Oh, make me as a child of eternity while in time! Oh, in sovereign mercy, give me to go through the world under the influence of special power from Thee! May I be raised above the influence of all sensual desires and pursuits! Oh, give me to feel that I am ordained, called, qualified, and redeemed by Thee, for special service both in the Church and in the world! Oh, give me to live in this holy atmosphere at all times, and in all places and companies, in all humility of mind, and gracious soul-humbling, soul-transforming feelings, for Jesus Christ's sake, for Thy name's sake, and for Thy own glory! Oh, restore my voice again! Lord, heal me, I beseech Thee, for these great and holy ends! Oh, let nothing incapacitate me for Thy service! . . . . My chapels shall be settled so that the surplus income go to support the regular Ministry in the



Circuit." Such was the grand scheme of practical usefulness which Thomas Bush devised in humble dependence upon God. That he did not lose sight of the important objects for the attainment of which it had been conceived, the following memorandum proves. Five years after his special day of communion with Jehovah upon White Horse Hill, he thus writes:—"O my God! I have most solemnly given myself up to Thee. I have particularly covenanted and engaged to take the whole district of the Vale of the White Horse as my vineyard, as far as my yearly income will allow, with proper quotas to Thy general cause and poor relations. Oh, look upon the still desert parts of my native land! How many counties are still comparatively destitute of Methodism and the genuine doctrines of the Gospel, by any truly evangelical ministration! I know foreign missions are of inconceivable importance, the most noble subject that can engage the mind of man; and while Christians are alive to God, they can never view with indifference the state of the heathen world. Blessed be God! the missionary flame is revived, and is, I trust, increasing. A Christian public is alive and active in that department. As to myself, I am a poor, solitary, afflicted, insignificant individual; and have for some years been led to try to do a little good in those ways and directions where, I believe, humanly speaking, it would not otherwise have been done at all. I will be entirely and unreservedly devoted to God. Oh, that I may as fully as my nature is capable! If the Lord should continue or increase my providential talents, I will use them fully for Him. I will have a particular eye not only on one district, but to the neglected parts of this country in general, if I can possibly, by my yearly income, my little influence, or by writing, advance the glory of God in that way. O my God! if Thou canst so greatly bow, heal me, restore my voice and



strength, so far as shall enable me to glorify Thee. Oh, ordain me for special service for Thee ! Even favour me with justness of thought, humility of soul, spirituality of mind, that will enable me to glorify Thyself, for Christ's sake."

Methodism did not find its way into the town of Wantage before the year 1818, and it was not till the following year that regular religious services by Wesleyans were established. An apartment, which had been used as a workshop, was altered and adapted for the purposes of Divine worship. In 1820, Thomas Bush took upon himself the responsibility of supporting an unmarried Minister for four years ; promising, at the same time, to make suitable provision for a married man at the end of the period named. The Conference thereupon appointed the Rev. J. Willis to the charge of the Preaching-station ; and his labours were so successful, that upon the 28th September 1820, the first Methodist Society in Wantage was constituted. The room used as a Preaching-house, being soon found to be too small, a chapel was built, and opened in the month of October 1822. A dwelling-house adjoining the chapel was also erected for the accommodation of the Minister ; both buildings being completed at the charge of Mr Bush, with the exception of monies which were collected at the opening services, and which were applied to the same purpose, and a debt of about six hundred pounds, for which provision was made in his will, so that, at the death of the benefactor, the house and chapel might be entirely free from encumbrance. Having thus been mainly the means of providing a sanctuary and Minister for the people of Wantage, the good man whose career we are endeavouring to trace turned his attention to the Swindon Circuit, for the purpose of seizing any opportunity for benevolent usefulness that might present itself before him. The financial affairs of the Swindon Society having been in a greatly embarrassed condition for several



years, and the sale of the chapel being seriously entertained in consequence, he not only discharged the debt, but built two houses on the ground attached to the chapel, and devised the whole of the property for the purpose of furthering the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in the neighbourhood, with the exception of the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds, which he directed to be repaid, at his decease, to his executor. To the close of his life he regularly subscribed to the funds of this Circuit. Following out the beneficent plan which he had conceived, he also afforded timely aid and succour to other Societies that were struggling against adverse circumstances; and in this manner he spent yearly not less than five hundred pounds out of an income of about seven hundred pounds. At West Hendred, in the year 1830, a chapel was built by him, and in the following year he purchased the chapel at Childrey; both buildings being secured to the Connexion, and settled upon trustees. In 1835, he was mainly instrumental in rebuilding the chapel at Lamborne, to which a new school-room and vestries were attached; a debt of four hundred and eighty pounds, due to him by the building fund, being cancelled by his will. At Faringdon, a chapel was built in 1837, through his liberality, aided by donations from his friend Mr William Shipperry; and these gentlemen, on condition of receiving a small grant from the Contingent Fund, jointly agreed to be responsible for the sustenance of a young Minister. In the year 1842, a chapel was opened at Highworth, which had been erected solely at the charge of the Lamborne farmer and his friend; and it is worthy of notice, that the latter was prominently connected with the benevolent schemes of Mr Bush till the close of that good man's career. The requirements of the Society at Wantage calling for additional and more commodious space in the sanctuary there, a very handsome and well-appointed chapel



was built in 1844, at a cost to Mr Bush of five hundred pounds, besides the fund which had been raised by the Society. At Letcombe-Regis, a singularly neat place of worship was opened on the 29th September 1847. This was the last public occasion marked by the presence of that benefactor of Methodism, and his subscriptions towards providing a suitable Methodist chapel for his native village amounted to sixty pounds. Throughout his Christian course, indeed, he dedicated his means in the manner we have described, and for the glory of God, although we have not been able either to record fully the extent of his liberality, or to mention individually the numerous Societies that were largely benefited through his philanthropy. That he was no half-hearted follower of Him who went about doing good, his actions proved ; while the motives which guided his conduct at all times are beautifully and piously set forth by himself in the following—

“SOLEMN ACT OF DEVOTION, OR SELF-DEDICATION  
TO GOD.

“Everlasting God ! the Fountain of life, who fillest, supportest, and quickenest all things ; I bow myself as in Thy presence, and unfeignedly adore Thee as the Former of my body, as the Father of my spirit, and as the constant Preserver and Benefactor of both. I confess myself to be under infinite and every possible obligation to love and to serve Thee with all the powers of that excellent nature Thou hast given me ; but in innumerable instances I have greatly abused it, and thereby forfeited my life. Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to live on the face of Thy earth, or to taste the various goodness which is here provided for Thy children. The noble organs of my body and powers of my soul I have yielded as instruments of unrighteousness to the service of



sin ; most justly, therefore, might I now have been languishing under sickness, racked by tormenting pains, or cut down by the hand of death. But, adored be Thy mercy, Thou hast not rewarded me according to my deserts : Thou still waitest to be gracious, and hast often interposed by Thy kind and almighty arm to rescue me from the grave. For ever magnified be Thy grace, which permits me to live, yea, to live surrounded with such blessings of various kinds. What thanks can I render to Thine Infinite Majesty for this unspeakable favour? I praise, I extol Thee with all my spirit and strength. I adore Thee as my life and the length of my days ; the Guardian, Restorer, and Preserver of my frame, and—*speciality for speciality, God is witness*—I here, with a prostrate and most truly grateful soul, *consecrate and give myself absolutely to Thee*. I most solemnly avouch Thee, Almighty Jehovah—as in Thine infinite goodness Thou hast been pleased to permit me—for my Father, my Portion, my King, and my God. The life which Thou gavest me, and hast thus graciously preserved, I most unfeignedly devote to Thee, to be regulated by Thy laws, spent in Thy service, and conducted in Thy fear. I renounce everything as my happiness in comparison of Thy favour, and to please and obey Thee shall be the chief care and governing principle of all my future life. All my concerns of body and soul I most gratefully assign into Thy hands, rejoicing that Thou wilt condescend to direct and manage them for me. I now promise, through Thy help, to be always contented ; yea, will endeavour to be always thankful, however Thou art pleased to deal with me or mine ; being assured that Thou knowest what is good for me infinitely better than I can judge for myself. Behold, O Lord, I am thine : Thine by the most sacred and inviolable ties—made by Thy power, maintained by Thy bounty, guarded by Thy providence, restored by Thy favour when going down into the pit, and



by the blood of Thy dear Son redeemed from the power of eternal darkness and death. Deal, therefore, with Thy servant as seemeth good in Thy sight. *Whatever substance, knowledge, influence, time, or any other talent, I do now or ever shall possess, I most heartily devote to Thine honour and service. Thy will shall be the rule, and Thy glory the end, of all my future actions.* Choose, O Lord God, most wise and most merciful, my portion and my lot for me : guide me by Thy counsel through all the ways of the present world, and at last receive me to Thy kingdom and glory in the other.

“To Thee, likewise, O Christ ! my gracious Redeemer, the Son of God and Saviour of the world, I most unfeignedly devote myself and all that I have. ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, wisdom, and riches, and strength.’ I was lost, but Thou savedest me ; a prisoner of death, but Thou diedst that I might live. I am Thine, for Thou hast loved me and washed me from my sins, and redeemed me by Thy blood. I now, therefore, from my soul, absolutely renounce whatever is inconsistent with Thy property and claim in me. I sincerely abjure the world and the flesh, as far as they at all oppose the authority of Christ, whom alone I now avouch as my Proprietor and King. I here bow myself before Thee, in token of the deepest subjection of my body, soul, and spirit to Thy government. I bind myself as by a solemn oath of allegiance, swearing to be faithful to my Divine Master even unto death ; that His enemies shall be my enemies, His friends my friends, and that my whole life shall be conducted according to His pattern and the laws of His Gospel. I believe in the blessed Jesus as the Christ of God, as the only Saviour of the world, as the Light, the Resurrection, and the Life of men. I most humbly resign my understanding, my will, and every passion and power of my nature, to be



sanctified, controlled, and directed by Thee. Take into the arms of Thy love a distressed soul who flies to Thee alone for salvation and hope. Write my name in the Book of Life ; support me under all troubles ; strengthen me for all conflicts ; carry me safe through all the difficulties and dangers of my present state ; and at last present me faultless before the presence of God, with exceeding triumph and joy.

“And forasmuch as I am utterly unable by my own strength to keep the covenant I have now made, and to perform what I have promised, I here also most humbly dedicate myself to the Holy and Ever-Blessed Spirit. My body I most thankfully devote to be His temple, and every power of my soul I resign to His influence. May He descend and ever dwell in me, and so entirely possess me that every appetite and passion, thought and imagination of my heart, may be made perfectly conformable to the image and will of God, that I may daily grow up into a meetness for the mansions of the blessed above. And now, blessed be God, who hath inclined me to enter into this covenant ; and blessed be His name, who, I trust, will enable me to keep it, in humble dependence on the promised aids of His Spirit, through Christ, my all-powerful and compassionate Redeemer. I will now subscribe my name, and call Heaven to witness my sincerity therein. O that the covenant I now make on earth may be ratified in heaven. Affix, blessed Saviour, who art the Mediator of the New Covenant, Thy signet thereto, and now seal by Thy Spirit both my body and soul to that everlasting redemption for which, according to Thy promise, I believingly wait. Amen and Amen.

“Signed and sealed this 26th day of April 1820.

“THOMAS BUSH.”

This covenant was renewed by him annually on his birthday, and he considered its engagements to be peculiarly



sacred and binding. For the glory of God and the good of souls, he laid out his substance, as we have seen, as a faithful steward of property belonging to his Master. His charity, however, was not confined to purely spiritual objects; although these, no doubt, absorbed much of his attention, and claimed largely his support. He made it his business to visit all the poor people of Lamborne at least once every year: and while his purpose was to minister to their eternal welfare, he never shut his heart against the appeals of poverty, but was always accessible to the meanest and poorest of his brethren of mankind. No doubt he was frequently imposed upon by crafty and designing persons; but he held it as a sound axiom that it is better to give alms to the undeserving or to impostors, than to pass over, even unwittingly, the claims of the honest but unfortunate poor. Benevolence was indeed to him the greatest luxury he enjoyed, and, next to communion with his Maker, the most fruitful source of his earthly happiness. In bearing the burdens of others, he fulfilled "the law of Christ." His own establishment was kept up in a very plain and homely way; and after discharging the duties of Christian hospitality, the surplus of his means was wholly devoted to purposes in the following order:—1. The erection of chapels; 2. The support of the Ministry in his own and the Wantage and Swindon Circuits; 3. Aiding various religious and benevolent institutions, but especially the Bible and Missionary Societies, and the Connexional funds; and 4. The relief of the poor. Such was the plan of usefulness he devised, and to which he faithfully adhered. But all the good effected through his instrumentality will not be fully known until the "great day of account."

About the beginning of the year 1837, Mr Bush was deprived by death of the loving care and thoughtful regard of his pious mother. The bereavement was humbly sub-



mitted to by the son as a dispensation from the Lord, meant to warn him of the fleeting nature of all that pertains to earth, and to incite him to further improvement of his talents and opportunities for service in the cause of Christ. Mrs Bush was a woman of strong sense and sound experience in the Christian life. Her manner was characterised by great simplicity and quiet, unobtrusive candour; while her piety was earnest and genuine. Thoroughly economical herself in the management of her household, she sometimes deemed the liberality of her son to be excessive, if not injudicious; but, it is worthy of notice, that she never refused to supply him with money when his own store had at any time become temporarily exhausted, through the exercise of what she considered to be a too generous charity. Indeed, for a considerable time before her death, she refrained from imposing any restraint upon his benevolence, and frequently aided him in his philanthropy. She met with him in Class, and their communion tended greatly to the spiritual advantage of the Christian mother and her son. He had in early manhood formed the resolution to remain single during the lifetime of his mother, and after her decease he continued unmarried, for the principal reason that he might the more effectually promote the spread of the Gospel, unfettered by the cares and duties attached to the head of a family. The memory of her, who had been not only the stay and protection of his youth, but also his dearly loved sister in the Lord, he continued to cherish with the most exalted filial reverence and regard. "She is in heaven," he has been heard to say, "but I would not now do anything which would have grieved my mother." Shortly before her death she said to her son, "Thomas, we were brought to God together, and we will be buried together." Her wishes in that respect were carried out; a grave being prepared for the interment of her remains at



Lamborne, while the family burial-ground was at Childrey, and in the former churchyard also was the body of her son afterwards laid to rest. Upon the day that witnessed the severance of his dearest earthly tie, he writes : " O my God, I am this day an orphan, deprived of my dear surviving parent. I bless Thee, from the ground of my heart, for sparing her to me so long. I will now, by Thy grace, be in the fullest sense entirely devoted to Thee. I solemnly renew all my foregoing covenants, and bind the whole upon me. I will be Thine in body, soul, spirit, substance, time, influence, and every talent—*all I am, have, or ever shall have, or be*. I do solemnly take Thy cause and the poor as my inheritance and family. I will from this time be fully a servant of the Church, and lay myself out in promoting Thy spiritual kingdom upon earth, particularly in Wantage, Swindon, and those neglected districts."

His love to Christ and devotedness to the service of the Gospel were not only exhibited in the generosity of his giving, but also in the activity of his personal efforts in that service. When the loss of speech caused him to relinquish his cherished scheme to be "in spirit a travelling preacher," he concentrated his energies, as we have seen, to two modes of practical usefulness—epistolary correspondence and the stewardship of his means for the glory of the Almighty. When his power of utterance was somewhat restored, however, he resumed, when at all able to do so, the position in public of a leading lay member of the Wesleyan Connexion. He assisted at many annual meetings under the auspices of the Missionary Society. The quarterly meetings of the Wantage and Swindon Circuits, as well as those of his own, he attended, and took a deep interest in their proceedings. He was District Treasurer for the Worn-out Ministers' Fund, as well as for the Missionary Society; while the office of Sunday-school Superintendent was filled by him in a manner



which gave the greatest satisfaction to all interested in the welfare, for time and eternity, of the rising generation. In the individual members of a numerous Class he at all times manifested the warmest interest, and specially devoted one hour weekly to supplication on their behalf at a throne of grace. His sympathies were warm, and extended far beyond the circle in which he moved, and the Church to which he was ardently attached. His virtues were of a pure and lofty character, attracting the attention of many eminently pious Christians of other denominations than his own ; and although at times difference of opinion might arise as to non-essential points in religion, the heart of Thomas Bush was ever open to reciprocate the friendship of all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, without reference to their convictions regarding minor details in worship or creed.

The close of a good man's life is fraught with instruction to all who seek to profit by the lessons it conveys. The latter days of him whose life we have now been endeavouring to portray, furnished no exception to the rule. For a considerable time previous to his decease, his conversation and deportment evidenced frequent contemplation regarding that momentous change. On his last birthday, 11th October 1847, he renewed his covenant with God, unreservedly and in humble submission to the Divine will. The following entry appeared among his papers under that date :—" O God, I solemnly give myself afresh to Thee, to be entirely set apart for Thee, in promoting Thy spiritual kingdom. Oh, spare me as long as Thou canst use me for Thy glory ! " Other entries, found after his removal to the better land, are remarkable as indicating what may be termed a fore-knowledge of the time when he would quit a state of probation, and enter upon his glorious inheritance in the realms of the blest. The following will suffice as examples :—" I will add to his years fifteen, 1832." " I will add to his



days fifteen, 1832." And again, in the margin of a copy of "Dr Adam Clarke's Commentary" by the side of the note on the last verse in the Book of Daniel—viz., "But go thou thy way till the end be ; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days"—these words appear twice, "Oh, for fifteen years !—2d November 1832." His death took place on the 2d November 1847, precisely fifteen years afterwards ! On the 20th October he met with his Class for the last time, when he expressed a firm determination to consecrate himself in entire devotion to his Saviour. On the morning of Wednesday, 27th October, he told his friends that he had passed a very restless night ; and, in reference to the Annual Missionary Meeting which was to be held on that day, expressed an earnest wish that it was over. After breakfast he was seized with a violent attack of sickness, which completely prostrated him, and he was removed, insensible, to his bedroom. In the evening consciousness returned, and he manifested considerable anxiety as to the result of the Missionary Meeting. When a favourable report regarding it had been given, he exclaimed, with holy gratitude, "Praise the Lord !" During the night a dear friend watched by his bedside and engaged in prayer with him. In that act of Divine worship Mr Bush heartily joined, and afterwards expressed his sincere and unshaken trust in Christ. On the following morning he requested that the members of his household would come into his room for the purpose of engaging in family devotion. One of the members of the Missionary deputation, the Rev. Joseph Stinson, offered up a prayer, in which the enfeebled servant of Jehovah evidently united, but subsequently appeared to suffer from extreme nervousness—an attack from which he suffered during the next two days. On the afternoon of the Saturday preceding his death, he was much engaged in mental supplication to Him who had



been his stay and comfort during a long and eminently useful life. To the servant who waited upon him, he said, "Live to God. I am going. I said I should die this winter, about Michaelmas, did I not? I am taken for death. Praise the Lord!" On being asked if he had any desire to live, he replied, "Not for a moment, if it is the Lord's will to take me out of it all." A passage from Scripture was repeated in his hearing, viz., "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord shall deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." "Yes," said the Christian philanthropist, after a moment's reflection, "I have been a father to the poor, and they pray for me. Poor things, they have an interest in my life. But," he added, "*that is not the foundation.*"

In his fatal illness he had, upon one occasion at least, to engage in a conflict with the enemy of souls; but he became "more than conqueror," through Him that loved him and gave Himself for him. During his last Sabbath upon earth, he was occasionally so cheerful and happy that his friends believed he would recover and resume his work in the Church. But God had willed otherwise. Having expressed a wish to be left alone for a short time, he was overheard praying earnestly that the Lord would vouchsafe to him the blessing of entire sanctification, and receive him unto Himself. On the day following, he was removed to another apartment, with a view to mitigating, if possible, the violence of a fit of agitation from which he suffered. Having partially recovered from the attack, he said, "I shall never go out of this room until I am carried out." Then, after a pause, "I am truly thankful I have done



what I have with my property. As far as my understanding has led me, I have spent it to the glory of God and the good of my fellow-creatures." At six o'clock in the evening of Tuesday, the 2d November, he died in full assurance of faith in the mercy and love of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By his will many claims—amounting to a considerable sum—were cancelled; in which were also devised handsome legacies to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, the Bible Society, and other funds of the Connexion. At the Quarterly Meetings of the Hungerford and Wantage Circuits, and the District Meeting held at Witney in May 1848, resolutions were passed, in which were expressed high esteem for his worth and respect for his memory as an earnest worker in the vineyard of the Lord. The following is the text of the resolution which was passed at the meeting last named:—"That this meeting, deeply affected at the demise of Thomas Bush, Esq., of Lamborne, wishes to express its sense of his many public virtues and excellencies. As a member of the District Meeting, he at all times showed himself to be the ardent lover of Methodism and liberal supporter of its Institutions. His counsels were distinguished by sound sense, affability, and Christian courtesy. The offices which he held to the Missionary Society and Auxiliary Fund, as treasurer, were conscientiously and faithfully performed, and his name will long be cherished as worthy of sincere regard. Though the District has lost a valuable counsellor and a practical friend, yet would we bow in perfect submission to the all-wise decree of Jehovah, saying, 'Not as we will, but as Thou wilt.'" His remains were interred beside those of his mother, and a monumental tablet to his memory was erected, bearing the following inscription, in the Wesleyan chapel at Lamborne:—



“THIS TABLET WAS ERECTED  
TO THE MEMORY OF THOMAS BUSH, ESQ., OF NORTH FARM,  
(WHO DIED NOV. 2, 1847, AGED 62 YEARS),  
BY HIS FRIEND AND RELATIVE,  
WM. SHIPPERY,  
IN ESTIMATION OF HIS SINCERE PIETY,  
CHRISTIAN USEFULNESS,  
AND UNOSTENTATIOUS CHARITY.  
'HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH.'  
THE DECEASED WAS CHIEFLY INSTRUMENTAL IN THE  
ERECTION OF THIS CHAPEL AND SCHOOLROOM.”

The being, attributes, and character of God, the Creator, together with the origin, nature, and destiny of man, the creature, formed principal objects of thoughtful study to him whose career is treated in this chapter. The Bible was to him a clear, yet unfathomable, stream, which reflected the will and purposes of the Almighty. The books of nature and Divine Providence were also scanned by him with absorbing interest, while he devoted more than fleeting attention to passing events and the circumstances of those by whom he was surrounded. His library contained about thirteen hundred volumes of the best English authors, chiefly in the departments of Theology, History, Biography, and Poetry. The works of the Puritan Divines he admired greatly, and they were his text-books in the prosecution of religious knowledge. “Ruin by Adam, Redemption by Christ, Regeneration by the Spirit :” these constituted the sum and substance of his theology and of his teaching as a Local Preacher. But while he revered the memory, and valued the writings, of eminent Divines, such as Baxter, Jeremy Taylor, Bates, Goodwin, Wesley, Fletcher, Clarke, Benson, or Watson, Christ was his Master, and the words



of the Great Teacher the rule of his life and the subject of his daily meditation. In doctrine an Arminian, he was thoroughly Catholic in spirit; and although ever ready to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus, he was invariably careful not to wound the feelings of an antagonist. The points on which Christians agree were to him of greater importance than those about which they differ; but upon many occasions, when he felt called upon to enter the lists of debate in the interests of truth and godliness, he proved himself a Controversialist of no mean order.

To the discipline and doctrines of Methodism he was warmly attached. Of the value of concord in the visible Church, he thus writes:—"I have known several, who were very jealous for God and the souls of men, to take offence in consequence of the trials and oppositions they have met with in the prosecution of their designs, and separate from their brethren. I believe, such is the importance of unity and concord in the sight of God, and its importance as a means to give a true picture of religion to the world, that in nineteen cases out of twenty it is a grievous dishonour to Christ and His holy cause on earth. I solemnly declare and vow that I never will, through any trials from any quarter whatever, as long as the essentials of a Church exist, separate from the body of Christians to which I have the honour and privilege to belong. May I ever act on this principle! Union is strength: it is of God, and from God. O my God! I beseech Thee in sovereign mercy, for Christ's sake, to ensure my perseverance in faith, hope, and love, and in the most unreserved devotedness to Thee and to Thy cause. Amen and amen." He was possessed of a clear, penetrating judgment, and of "a sound mind." The style of his language was concise, and unembellished with luxuriant figures of speech. The guiding principles of his life were devotedness to God, and benevolence towards man. His humility



was conspicuous in all his acts of philanthropy, and lent a peculiar charm to his character and disposition. His uprightness won the commendation and esteem even of those who differed from him on questions relating to religious belief or observances. His piety was cheerful, and calculated to attract others to the Saviour, by reason of the happiness which religion confers upon all such as submit to its influence. Sometimes he has been heard to say, "If I had a body full of health, a pocket full of money, a mind full of wisdom, and a heart full of grace, how much good I could do!" His station, talents, generosity, and exalted devotion made him indeed almost idolised by the people among whom he laboured. "The liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.



*PHILIP EMBURY.*

AMERICA owes much to the mother-country. Her legal polity, philosophical schools, philanthropic societies, and religious institutions have received form and character from their prototypes in Great Britain and Ireland. Many of her most noted adopted children, too, have hailed from the islands which formerly claimed her obedience. Indeed, the number of memorable men by whom the Old and New Worlds have been brought into intimate relationship might be termed "legion;" while space would fail us in the endeavour to enumerate them. Sufficient for our present purpose will it be to direct the attention of our readers to the history of American Methodism, as furnishing an example of the admitted truth stated in the first sentence of this chapter. Embury, who planted the tree of Methodism in the United States, was a son of Hibernia; Rankin, who trained and watered it, was a native of Caledonia; Coke, the first Methodist Episcopal Bishop, who sedulously cultivated the growing tree until its branches covered the greater part of the Western Continent, claimed Cambria as the land of his birth; and Wesley, the revered founder of the Connexion, and a loving son of Albion, gave unremitting attention to its interests, until Methodism assumed gigantic proportions in the Far West, and became the spiritual shelter of thousands of his emigrant countrymen. In such a bond of union which subsists between the Methodist Churches of Britain and America—a bond created by their mutual children, and hallowed by universal charity—we dis-



cover the primary cause of that remarkable degree of kindly feeling and reciprocity of courtesy and action, which has hitherto distinguished their relations with each other. But apart from historic associations, there are weighty reasons why members of the two Churches should regard each other as brethren united by the closest and most endearing ties. While, on the one hand, the great Republic and our sister Church are worthy of our affectionate esteem, inasmuch as they have sent to us men of brilliant parts and of pious worth, on the other hand, many of our fellow-citizens and brother-Christians have found, across the waters of the Atlantic, temporal and spiritual resting-places. On one shore of the mighty ocean they were born, on the other they died; while with both they were in life equally and nobly identified. The name of one of our emigrant brethren is invested with a peculiar interest, and his life and labours, which were so eventful of good to the world, demand at our hands more than mere cursory observation. Originally the son of British Wesleyanism, he became to American Methodism what the acorn is to the oak, what the spring is to the river, what first principles are to the elaborated scientific theory or extended religious creed. By virtue of the initiatory steps which he took, in the capacity of a Lay-Preacher, he earned for himself the designation of "the Founder of Methodism in New York," and his memory is justly revered as that of one of the most distinguished "Nursing Fathers" of the sister Connexion of our Church in the Western Continent.

The settlement of the Protestant Palatines in Ireland forms a subject peculiarly interesting, in many respects, to the student of history. In language, customs, manners, and religion they differed from the people among whom they dwelt. In the year 1688, the legions of France devastated the Palatinate of the Rhine, and changed the social aspect



of one of the most fruitful and prosperous of the German provinces. The people were followers of Martin Luther in their faith, and in the eyes of their conquerors no barbarity was too humiliating for those who had thrown off their allegiance to the Papacy. But this war—marked by the direst cruelty on the part of the hirelings of a Popish Government—was but the precursor to sufferings of the most terrible description. Driven from their homes by the most relentless persecution, many at last sought the protection of England, and General Marlborough drew the folds of the British flag around them, and sheltered them, for a time at least, from the rapacious cruelty of their enemies. But the sympathy which had been extended towards them by the great military commander of a Protestant State, only incited their persecutors to redoubled energy in the attempt to blot out the name of this humble nationality from among the nations of the earth. In the year 1709, the abject condition of the German Palatines excited deep sympathy in Britain, and the Government despatched ships to Rotterdam for the purpose of bringing to this country as many as chose to emigrate. About seven thousand of them embraced the opportunity thus presented, and landed in England, where they were treated with considerate kindness. Of that number nearly three thousand were sent to the British Settlement of New York; but being rather coldly received by the people, they journeyed to Pennsylvania, where many settled down in contentment and happiness, while others found in North Carolina and Maryland a refuge from the troubles to which they had been sorely subjected in their native land. Of the remainder who were left in England, a few took up a permanent abode in this country; small numbers, also, in the county of Kerry and other parts of the sister island; while the great body were allowed to occupy small holdings in the county of



Limerick, where their thrift and industry exhibited a marked contrast to the squalor and idleness of the greater portion of the native peasant population. Upwards of one hundred families having fixed their residence on the estate of Lord Southwell, in the last-named county, they devoted themselves to the cultivation of their small farms, and the pseudo-military duty which the Government exacted from them, in return for the patronage it extended, in the shape of freeing them from rent-payment for the term of twenty years. As we have already said, they differed greatly from their Irish neighbours. In no particular, perhaps, did this difference tend to retard their prosperity so much as their language. Their Teutonic dialect served to raise a barrier between themselves and the people of their adopted country, while by the latter they were viewed in the light of mercenaries of an alien rule. By intermarriage, however, the bitterness of the feelings with which they were regarded became softened and subdued; and in course of time, they were assimilated in some respects to those among whom their lot had been cast, though retaining much of the distinctiveness of their race and customs. As the old worthies, who had suffered for their nationality and religion on the banks of the Rhine, died out, their descendants neglected to cultivate the uprightness which had been inculcated by their example and precept, and gradually conformed to the world. For nearly half a century the Palatines of Ireland were without spiritual guides of their own language and people, and, in consequence, lost the power of that mighty influence which in the bygone times had enabled their godly forefathers to brave persecution, suffering, and death for the cause of their Saviour and their country. Becoming thereby apathetic and demoralised, they added to their neglect of the claims of religion, profanity, drunkenness, and other open and shameless wickedness. But God, in



sovereign mercy, made provision for the spiritual destitution of "the stranger in a strange land." English Methodism having penetrated to the South of Ireland, her Itinerant Preachers sought these poor lost sheep in the wilderness, and presented Christ as He is freely offered in the Gospel, for their acceptance, in the completeness of His salvation, in the fulness of His love and grace. The happiest results followed the labours of the Wesleyan heralds of the Cross in the Palatine villages. Hundreds were converted to God, and a thorough revolution took place in their social existence. Sabbath-breaking, cursing, and debauchery became unknown among them, save in their sorrowful remembrances. Seriousness and diligence supplanted apathy and carelessness in their daily conduct. Industry and frugality resumed the positions in the community from which they had been for a time cast out by slothfulness and sin. Neatness, order, and contentment once more became prominent characteristics in the domestic economy of that humble people. Such were some of the fruits of the Gospel, that had been revived among them through the instrumentality of Wesleyan Methodism, which in turn was to be signally benefitted by the life-long devotion of those who had been blessed through her agency.

A descendant of one of the Palatine families that had settled in Limerick, after having been driven from the "fatherland," Philip Embury was born at Ballingran, a village situate about two miles from Rathkeale, and sixteen miles from the county town, in the year 1728. According to records in the possession of his kindred, he was baptized on the 29th September in the same year. His parents had many children, and the head of the household was compelled to labour sedulously for their maintenance and education—the latter being of a limited, but withal useful, description. Philip was placed at school while still



very young, and he received his first lessons from one eminently fitted to train the minds of children in the principles of morality and religion, though perhaps wanting in many of the accomplishments which are considered essential in the modern schoolmaster. Philip Guier, the master of the Palatine School at Ballingran, acted in the capacity of "burgomaster," or justice of the peace, in the village, and his influence for good was considerable in the unpretending commonwealth, even before the advent of the Itinerant Preachers. After the revival of religion took place, he became one of the most prominent leaders of the Methodism Society which had been established, and finally an able and successful Local Preacher. To his care young Embury was first committed for the purpose of receiving instruction in learning, and the boy remained under the guidance of the Christian teacher for a considerable time, and until removed by his parents to the English school at Rathkeale. Having received an education suited to his sphere in life, the youth was apprenticed to a carpenter of his native place, to whom he gave the highest satisfaction for his conscientious attention and application to his work. When his apprenticeship had been concluded, he had earned for himself some reputation in the neighbourhood as a skilful mechanic, and steady, persevering young man. Up to this period he had not been the subject of a changed heart, neither had he been an attendant upon the Methodist services which were held statedly by the Preachers of the neighbourhood; but the early counsels of good Philip Guier, no doubt, served to inspire him with an awe for sacred things, while he was kept from unhealthy excitement and temptations to open wickedness, by reason of the quiet character of the society in which he moved. With pious persons, such as the pedagogue of his childhood, he was frequently brought into immediate contact and conver-



sation, and thus—we may surmise with every probability of correctness—were the seeds of godliness sown, which were afterwards to blossom and bear fruit in the conversion of thousands. It is also more than likely that he occasionally heard the Word of Truth ministered by one or other of those eminent Itinerant Preachers who visited the district, in their missions of love and peace to the wayward, careless, or rebellious. But by whose individual instrumentality, or under what circumstances, Philip Embury was brought to a knowledge of his lost condition by nature, and an appreciation of the Saviour's character as an ever-willing and all-sufficient Surety, we cannot discover with any degree of certainty. Of this, however, we are assured, by undoubted evidence, that he had entered the years of manhood without having fully realised the exceeding sinfulness of sin, or rightly apprehending the importance of this present life, as a state of probation preparatory to eternal destiny for weal or woe.

The great Founder of Methodism, as is well known, frequently visited Ireland, and it is highly probable that Embury was, upon several occasions, one of Mr Wesley's hearers at the out-door services which he conducted, while passing through the district in which Ballingran is situated, in the month of August 1752, and that the word spoken proved of saving power to him who was afterwards to become a herald of the Gospel to the people of America. We are led to this conclusion by the following entry in a small book belonging to his family, and also by the fact that for three or four months previous to the time when he received "the gift of pardon," he had diligently sought for mercy at the hand of the Lord. The entry is as follows :—"On Christmas Day—being Monday y<sup>e</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> of December, in the year 1752—the Lord shone into my soul by a glimpse of His redeeming love : being an earnest of my redemption in



Christ Jesus, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Phil: Embury." Thus did he participate in the manifold grace of God, and in that mercy which is never withheld from any truly penitent sinner. Happy in the consciousness of the Divine favour, he soon gave scriptural evidence of his conversion; nor was he ever afterwards moved from the faith of the gospel.

After his conversion he earnestly identified himself with the people of God, by a regular attendance upon the services of the sanctuary, and a consistent walk and conversation. He applied his mind to a diligent study of the Scriptures; and the knowledge of Divine things thus obtained, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit upon his efforts, together with his godly deportment, singled him out as one eminently fitted for prominent usefulness in the Church. Accordingly, he was in due time appointed to the office of Class-Leader, and afterwards authorised to exercise his talents as a Local Preacher. So exemplary was his conduct, and so able were his expositions of the Word, that he was regarded, in a great measure, as a Pastor among the Palatines. Nor were his labours at all likely to be confined to the district in which he resided. The well-known administrative foresight of Mr Wesley would not readily allow one of Embury's ability to remain long in a circumscribed sphere of labour, when the harvest was so plentiful and the labourers were so few. It is recorded that the great director of Methodist enterprise passed through Ballingran in the month of June 1756, and it is surmised that he then conferred with the young Local Preacher upon the subject of the Itinerant Ministry, and the fitness of the Lay Pastor for the onerous position of a Travelling Preacher. But be that as it may, there can be no doubt that in the year 1758, at a Conference at Limerick, which was presided over by Mr Wesley, the subject of this sketch was, along with others,



recommended for the work of the Itinerancy. It is equally beyond dispute that his name was placed on the List of Reserve ; and thus, in the providence of God, was he kept free for the special mission to which his after-life was to be consecrated ; for had he been at once appointed to a Circuit, his name, in all human probability, would never have appeared as that of the Founder of Methodism in the distant West.

Previous to the time of his being placed upon the Reserve, Philip Embury had been mainly instrumental in building a chapel at Court-Matrix, one of the Palatine villages ; indeed, it is said that the timber-work was for the most part executed by himself. While the structure was in course of erection he lodged with a relative, Mr Switzer, who resided at the place ; and while there he formed an attachment which directed the current of his existence, and caused him eventually to seek a home in the land where his name became a household word in the religious community to which he belonged, and for whose interests he toiled with all the ardour of his own zealous nature. Such were the circumstances of his life when his name was placed on the Reserve List of Preachers ; and the situation was not without its difficulties. On the one hand, the duties of a regular Preacher were congenial to his tastes ; while the exigencies of his own neighbourhood, and the attractions of a settled home, naturally conspired to entice him to continue in a sphere where he had been eminently useful and supremely happy. Besides, he could not calculate with any degree of certainty upon the time when he would be called to enter the important sphere of activity towards which an initiatory step had been taken, and his mind was in consequence considerably unsettled. After waiting for some months in expectation of a summons from the governing body to assume the position of an Itinerant, he resolved upon



abandoning such an intention, and decided to devote himself to the inferior, but scarcely less important, duties of a Local Preacher.

On the 27th November 1758, Philip Embury was united in marriage to his cousin, Mary Switzer. The ceremony took place in the church at Rathkeale, and all outward circumstances seemed to predict for him a future of comparative ease, comfort, and respectability. About a year after that event, however, clouds began to darken his domestic firmament. The Palatine leases, held under the Lord Southwell, were for a period of fifty years, and at a small rent-charge ; but on their expiry, somewhat exorbitant demands were made by his lordship's agent, as the terms upon which renewals of the same might be granted. On that account great dissatisfaction existed among the tenantry on the estate, and this culminated in a tide of emigration to America. Up to the time of his marriage Embury had never entertained any idea of quitting the land of his birth ; and after this union had been consummated, it had been his intention to cultivate the small farm he occupied, work, as he had hitherto done, at his trade, and fulfil the duties which devolved upon him as one of the Local Pastors of the people. The increase of his yearly rent, however, added to the prospect of having to provide for a rising family, caused him to turn his thoughts towards the further shores of the Atlantic, and determined him upon seeking, in the land whither so many of his kindred had already gone, a home, and freedom from grinding oppression. When his purpose of emigrating had become known throughout the Society to which he had been the means of much spiritual blessing, great regret was expressed ; while the darkness of the social prospect, added to their love for the Local Preacher, caused several to resolve at once upon joining Embury in his voyage to the New World.



The departure of the little band of Methodist emigrants created no little excitement among their friends and neighbours. At the time appointed for the sailing of the vessel, a large crowd had assembled upon the quay at Limerick, many having travelled from Ballingran and the neighbourhood, for the purpose of taking a last lingering look at the form of him who had been their able and gifted guide and counsellor in the gospel. He was of the number of those who had been as the first-fruits of Methodist enterprise in the Palatine village. He had singularly adorned the faith which he professed, not only by his ministry, but also by his walk and conversation. He had been the Leader of the Society at Ballingran, and the humble sanctuary there was now to know him no more for ever. He was related to some within that crowd by birth; as a Christian Pastor to a congregation of the Lord's people, and as a "spiritual father," he was allied to many more; while towards all who stood beside the laden ship he bore the warmest feelings of Christian affection and solicitude. An interest deep and intense, therefore, filled the breasts of those who waited, with tearful eyes, to bid him an affectionate, sorrowing farewell! Standing on the gunwale, he preached his last sermon to his Palatine brethren in Ireland. Then a final prayer is offered—hands are stretched out for a parting pressure—and as the vessel leaves the quay the Lay Pastor commends the loved ones left behind to the care and protection of

"The God that rules on high,  
That all the earth surveys,  
That rides upon the stormy sky,  
And calms the roaring sea."

Under such circumstances did Philip Embury leave his native country, and on the 10th August 1760, he arrived



safely with his fellow-voyagers and friends at New York. His last act before quitting Ireland had been the invocation of the Divine blessing, and breathing a prayer for the guidance of Jehovah he first set foot in the land of his adoption. Among those who accompanied him thither was one whose name is now justly revered throughout the American Methodist Churches. The following is a brief outline of her early history. Barbara Ruckle was born in the neighbourhood of Ballingran, at a place called Ruckle Hill, in the year 1734. Her parents were Wesleyans, and she was brought up in the faith which had been revived, as we have seen, in the Palatine Community. When she had attained the age of eighteen, she openly professed "repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," and was in consequence admitted as a member of the Society. Having begun the Christian race, she persevered unto the end, and until she received "the inheritance of reward." Her love to the Saviour was not only sincere, but ardent; while her fidelity to the doctrines and practice of evangelical religion and piety was at all times, and under every circumstance, firm and unassailable. The inward criterion of her daily spiritual life was "the witness of the Spirit;" and throughout her long, well-spent, and honoured career, she never, for one whole day from the time of her conversion, lost the conscious evidence of her heavenly Father's love, and her acceptance with Him. It is true that, like Luther, the fellow-countryman of her progenitors, she was sometimes subjected to much mental conflict and attendant depression; but by habitual recourse to prayer, and the lively actings of her faith, she was "more than conqueror." Her eminent piety and strong affections exalted her to the position of a counsellor to her associates, even before she had assumed the dignity of a wife. Her German Bible was to her a constant and familiar compa-



nion—the guide and watchword of her youth—the means of solace and comfort in her declining years. Shortly before her departure for New York she was married to Paul Heck, who was likewise a member of the Palatine Community, and a Methodist. With childlike confidence in God, and mutual trust in the purity and love of each other, the lately wedded pair sought a home in a distant land ; while the Lord had work there for Barbara Heck to do, among those who were still “strangers to the commonwealth of Israel.”

On their arrival in America, some of the emigrants dispersed in search of employment, and, it is feared, lost all sense of the fear of God and the influence of religion, in the gaieties of a world to which they had been unaccustomed. To Embury, the transition from an obscure village in Ireland to a city which was rising into considerable importance, and which was destined to become the commercial capital of the Great Republic, was enervating, and seemed, for a time at least, to repress his zeal for Christ and His cause on earth. It is true that he united himself to the Lutheran Church, and continued regularly his devotional exercises at the family altar ; but a diffidence seems to have been induced by the thought of the altered circumstances of his life, and with the exception, perhaps, of his intercourse with Mr and Mrs Heck, and one or two others, his Christian communion with those who had sailed with him from Ireland would appear to have been interrupted. Besides, in his new sphere he was dependent in a great measure upon the will of others for the means of his own and his family's subsistence ; and the claims of his daily avocation precluded him from devoting much of his time to other than the duties of everyday life, and the temporal and spiritual well-being of his own family. Thus did he comport himself for the first six years which he spent in America ; prevented in some measure by the force of



outward circumstances from serving the Lord in a public capacity, as had formerly been his wont, but endeavouring to keep in the pathway to heaven, by regular attendance upon religious ordinances, personal piety and godliness, and a humble, abiding faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the month of August 1765, another party of Irish emigrants arrived in New York, among whom were several families from the Palatine villages, including those of Paul Ruckle (the brother of Barbara Heck), Peter Barkman, Henry Williams, Luke Rose, and Jacob Hick. Of these it is known that the latter and his wife had been Wesleyans in the old country, and they were afterwards among the number of the earliest members of the Methodist Church in the United States. The moral character of the others is partially hidden in obscurity, after the lapse of a century of time ; but we are enabled to conclude that some of them, at least, had but little respect for godliness, and readily joined with several of their countrymen, who had preceded them in their voyage across the Atlantic, for the purpose of employing the spare moments at their disposal in card-playing and other questionable amusements. To such an extent was this practice carried, that even some who had publicly professed to be followers of the Saviour were, after a short interval, alienated from their allegiance to the King of kings, and gradually throwing off the restraints of religion, were enticed to evil by the seductive voice of an unholy example. An American writer has erroneously endeavoured to fasten the stigma of backsliding upon Philip Embury, as well as upon those of his Palatine friends to whom the charge did in truthfulness apply. It is satisfactory to know, however, that so far as participation in the sinful pleasures of his countrymen was concerned, the memory of that distinguished Local Preacher is unsullied. The following letter places the matter, we think, in the



clearest light : it was written by the Rev. William M. Chipp, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and addressed to the Rev. J. B. Wakeley :—" In the winter of 1846, by invitation, I accompanied a number of English Wesleyans on a missionary tour in the Southern Section of Canada East. In the course of the week we came to Philipsburgh, a town not far distant from the northern line of Vermont. I was requested by several of these English ministers, in the remarks I might offer that evening, to refer to the introduction of Methodism into the United States. In complying with that request, I mentioned the name of Philip Embury. That moment the chairman arose, and desired me to pause for a moment, remarking, ' The son of Philip Embury is in the house.' He requested Mr Embury to come upon the platform, and he did so. I was introduced to him in that public manner. . . . I proceeded to speak of Philip Embury's agency in introducing Methodism in America. In referring to the party of card-players, I spoke of Mr Embury as being present, and the rebuke that Mrs Heck administered to him. At that time I supposed that the commonly received account was the true one. A few weeks after this meeting the Rev. John R. Shelley, of the British Conference, at that time labouring in Canada, visited me at St Alban's, Vermont, when I was stationed there, and informed me that the son of Embury complained that I had innocently done injustice to the memory of his father in my address at Philipsburgh, and that the commonly received version was not correct. Mr Shelley said, also, that Mr Embury's son had requested him to inform me that he had frequently heard his father converse on the subject, and his account of it was as follows :—" Mrs Heck went one evening to a neighbour's house, and found a company engaged in playing cards. *Philip Embury was not present.* Some of those present had been Methodists in



Ireland. Mrs Heck administered to them a reproof, and threw the cards away. She then went to Mr Embury's house, and found him alone. She entreated him with tears to preach to the people, and said, "We shall all go to hell together, and God will require our blood at your hands." At first he declined, but finally consented, and in the course of the week preached his first sermon in America to five persons, in his own house.' Mr Shelley further informed me, on the authority of Philip Embury's son, that his father always maintained a regard for religious things, and kept up the worship of God in his family. I have most implicit confidence in the statement that Philip Embury's son made to me through Mr Shelley."

From the preceding extract, it will be seen that Mrs Heck not only remained true to her religious convictions, but that she acted the part of monitress to her countrymen at a moment of the most critical importance, not only to the individuals who had fallen from their steadfastness, but also to the cause of pure religion over the whole American Continent. The spirit of this devoted handmaid of Jehovah was sorely grieved at the want of gospel teaching which prevailed in the city, and which conduced materially to that laxity in Christian practice unhappily apparent in every sphere of society, as well as among her dearest friends. With the latter her remonstrances, her entreaties, her warnings were fruitless, until, goaded to righteous anger by the callous indifference of her brother Paul Ruckle, and his companions, she seized the instruments of their gaming and tossed them into the fire, accompanying the action with words of solemn reproof and exhortation. Leaving their presence, she went, as we have seen, to the house of her cousin Philip Embury, and after informing him of what she had done, she earnestly besought him to resume his former position of Pastor among his friends and countrymen.



Rendered timid by a sense of the weight of responsibility which would rest upon him by adopting such a course in a place where Methodistic services had been hitherto unknown, he desired to be excused, and adduced arguments which, in his estimation, militated against the success of such a scheme as she had proposed. But Barbara Heck would take no denial ; and, scattering to the winds the frail structure of reasoning which the extreme modesty and reserve of her friend had raised, she at last gained his consent to preach to the people.

After having prevailed upon Philip Embury to exercise his talents, Mrs Heck hurried to her own home, and enlisted the sympathy of her husband on behalf of the religious revival which she had devised. In the course of a few days (in the month of October 1766), she returned to Barrack Street (now called Park Place), where Embury resided, bringing along with her the nucleus of the American Methodist body. When gathered together in the small apartment which formed the principal portion of the Preacher's dwelling, the congregation numbered only five persons. They were Paul and Barbara Heck, John Lawrence, who assisted Mr Heck in his business, Mrs Embury, and an African maid-servant named "Betty." Thus was Methodism foreshadowed as the Church of the descendants of Ham, as well as of the sons of Shem and of Japheth, not only upon the Western Continent, but also in every quarter of the globe ! The good work having been thus begun, though withal in a humble and unpretending manner, history informs us that the company that regularly assembled to hear "the gospel of the grace of God," soon grew too large for the accommodation afforded by Embury's house, and consequently it was found necessary to hire a room of a larger size. Here, under the faithful ministry of Columbia's first Methodist Preacher, a great spiritual awakening took



place among the people. A Class was also formed—numbering at first twelve persons ; and three bandsmen of H.M. XVIth Regiment, then stationed in barracks which were situated near to the “upper-room” wherein the meetings were held, were of great service to Embury in the capacity of “exhorters.” Their names were, Addison Low, James Hodge, and John Buckley ; and through the agency of these good men, under the direction of their Lay-Pastor, much good was effected. So “mightily grew the word of the Lord,” that in the course of a few months from the time of the removal of the Church from the house of the Preacher, the congregation had outgrown the dimensions of its second sanctuary, and the “Rigging-Loft”—famous throughout the Methodist Churches of the New World—was procured and fitted up as a tabernacle for the Lord of Hosts, and a Bethel for His believing children who were far distant from the land of their birth, and the Church which had been their spiritual mother.

Philip Embury, as we have already hinted, was of a diffident and retiring nature, exhibiting in his disposition a weakness which had been fostered rather than eradicated by early associations. But having been aroused from the state of lethargy into which he had unhappily fallen, he strenuously endeavoured to “redeem the time” by devoting himself, body, soul, and spirit, to the work which had been given him to do by his Divine Master. He called sinners to repentance, in no half-hearted manner ; he exhorted believers to let their light shine before men, in no uncertain terms. God blessed his efforts for the extension of His kingdom on the earth, and His servant was honoured in having many souls for his hire. The zeal of the Lay-Preacher increased as he became accustomed to his labour in the gospel ; his sermons grew more and more lively in their character ; and while his graces were



strengthened by a daily contact with the Word of Truth and believing prayer, his gifts were sensibly increased by continuous exercise. He preached in the "Rigging-Loft" on Sabbath mornings, as early as six o'clock; on the evening of each Lord's day also, and, after a time, on Thursday evenings. His hands were upheld in the work greatly through an accession to the rising Church of two God-fearing and self-denying men, who had been Methodists in Dublin, and who, upon their arrival in New York, united themselves to the Community of which Embury was the Pastor. Their names were Richard Sause and Charles White—names honourably identified with the consolidation of Methodism in the West. Possessed of considerable worldly means, they contributed liberally to the funds of the Church, while their eminent business capacities were of no little service to the Society in the negotiations which were entered into for the acquirement of chapel property. Thus, by the piety, earnestness, and zeal of the first Pastor and his flock, Wesleyanism became rooted in America. We shall now follow cursorily the successive steps in the growth of that tree of the Lord's right-hand planting, until its boughs overshadowed the whole of the land.

In the year 1767, when the "Rigging-Loft" had been occupied for about three months by the infant Church, the congregation was considerably startled one day by the appearance of a gentleman among the worshippers, clad in the uniform of an officer in the army. Having lost one of his eyes in his country's service, the socket was covered by a green shade, which lent a somewhat sinister aspect to his presence, and tended to raise an alarm in the breasts of the more timid of the members; while the most anxious curiosity was felt by all to learn the motive which had induced the warlike individual to enter the humble temple of the Prince of Peace. After the benediction had been



pronounced, however, all fears were at once allayed, and the most ardent inquisitiveness satisfied, by the warm greeting and welcome explanation of him who had been the unconscious cause of so much perturbation. While the preacher and people crowded round him, the stranger stated in effect that he was Captain Webb, Barrack-master at Albany—that he was a brother Methodist who had been converted to God through the instrumentality of the Rev. John Wesley—that he was also a Local Preacher—and that he was ready, as a true “Soldier of the Cross,” to assist Embury in any way the latter might desire, or the Society approve. We can conceive, but not describe, the joy which pervaded the assembly on the receipt of such cheering intelligence, and the gratitude to the Supreme Controller of all events which, like a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour, ascended from the altar of many hearts. Hitherto the greater portion of the work of the sanctuary had devolved upon Embury; but now, in the good providence of the Almighty, an assistant-labourer had been provided—one whose name was to be honourably associated with the early history of American Methodism, and occupy a position only inferior to that filled by the one which forms the title of our present chapter.

It is somewhat unfortunate that the birthplace of Captain Webb is hidden in obscurity. A distinguished American authority has endeavoured to show that he was a compatriot of Embury and Barbara Heck; but although the point of his nationality has excited a considerable amount of interest on both sides of the Atlantic, little reliable evidence has been adduced to enable us to arrive at a definite conclusion in the matter. No uncertainty, however, exists as to the precise locality of his “spiritual birth,” for we are assured that he was brought into the liberty of the gospel at Bristol, in England, about the year 1764, his “spiritual



father" being the Founder of the Connexion. Having received a most cordial reception from his brethren in New York, the Captain entered with spirit into Embury's plans for lengthening the cords and strengthening the stakes of the lately-founded Zion. With his sword lying beside the open Bible, it was his custom to preach not less than three times a week; and his ministrations were abundantly blessed in the awakening and quickening of many. The following extract from a letter to the Rev. John Wesley, throws considerable light upon the history of the emigrant Church in its early days, and shows clearly the fraternal relationship which subsisted between its founder and Captain Webb; we make, therefore, no apology for its insertion here. The epistle itself was written from New York by Thomas Taylor, an Englishman, and one of the first eight Trustees of the Society in question. It was found among the papers of Christopher Hopper, one of the early Methodist Preachers, having been probably forwarded to that gentleman during his lifetime by Mr Wesley, for the purpose of enlisting his sympathy on behalf of the struggling Christian Church to which it referred. It is dated the 11th of April 1768. After detailing many of the circumstances connected with the formation of the first Methodist Society in America, the writer observes, relative to the advent of the Soldier-Preacher, Captain Webb:—"The novelty of a man preaching in a scarlet coat soon brought greater numbers to hear than the room could contain. But his doctrines were quite new to the hearers; for he told them, point-blank, that all their knowledge and profession of religion was not worth a rush unless their sins were forgiven, and they had the witness of God's Spirit with theirs that they were the children of God. This strange doctrine, with some peculiarities in his person, made him soon to be taken notice of, and obliged the little Society to look out for a larger house to preach



in. . . . . About this period, Mr Webb, whose wife's relations lived at Jamaica, on Long Island, took a house in that neighbourhood, and began to preach in his own house, and several other places on Long Island. Within six months about twenty-four persons received justifying grace—near half of them whites, the rest negroes. While Mr Webb, to borrow his own phrase, was 'felling the trees on Long Island,' Brother Embury was exhorting all who attended on Thursday evenings, and Sunday mornings and evenings, at the 'Rigging-House,' to flee from the wrath to come. His hearers began to increase, and some gave heed to his report about the time the gracious providence of God brought me safe to New York, after a very favourable passage of six weeks, from Plymouth. It was the 26th day of October last when I arrived, recommended to a person for lodging. I inquired of my host—who was a very religious man—if any Methodists were in New York? He informed me that there was one Captain Webb, a strange sort of a man, who lived on Long Island, and sometimes preached at one Embury's, at the 'Rigging-House.' In a few days I found out Embury. I soon found what spirit he was of, and that he was personally acquainted with you and your doctrines, and had been a helper in Ireland. He had formed two Classes—one of the men, and another of the women—but had never met the Society apart from the congregation, although there were six or seven men, and about the same number of women, who had a clear sense of their acceptance in the Beloved. You will not wonder at my being agreeably surprised in meeting with a few here who have been, and desire again to be, in connection with you. God only knows the weight of the affliction I felt in leaving my native country; but I have reason now to conclude God intended all for my good."

Under the able pastorate of the Irish Local Preacher, and



the fostering care of his zealous brother in the gospel, Methodism took deep root in the hearts of the people who thronged to listen to their stirring appeals. The Wesleyan spirit had been not only revived among the Palatines, but had become largely diffused among their neighbours and fellow-citizens. It is recorded that great numbers of people came to hear the Word of God preached, "as for their lives ;" while the numbers that waited upon the ministry of Philip Embury increased so fast, that the "Rigging-Loft" would not contain more than one-half of those who sought to enter it for the purpose of hearing him. The presence of the Master of Assemblies was manifested in the stout-hearted sinner being converted from the error of his ways, in the lukewarm being quickened, in the weak being strengthened, and in the strong being confirmed in the faith. But in the midst of so much cause for gratitude, considerable regret was also to be found on account of the large numbers of persons that were unavoidably shut out from the sanctuary by reason of its comparatively small dimensions—sixty feet by eighteen—when the requirements of the congregation were considered. After due deliberation, the building of a chapel was agreed upon by the Society. "Let us rise up and build," said Barbara Heck ; and her exhortation found a fitting response in the breasts of her fellow-believers. A piece of ground was selected, the ground-rent settled by consent, and the lease was ordered to be prepared. In the meantime, however, the Society had devoted two days to special fasting and prayer for the direction and blessing of God upon the undertaking ; while a door was unexpectedly opened by an all-gracious Providence, causing an alteration in the scheme which had just been devised for the glory of the Lord and the good of immortal souls. A devout young man, who had been for some time a constant attendant upon Embury's ministrations, although not joined in Society,









"The Cradle of Methodism"

*John Street, New York.*



offered ten pounds towards the purchase of a lot of ground, and of his own accord entered into negotiations with the proprietrix of some property which was for sale. The lady being willing to allow the price—six hundred pounds—to remain in the hands of the purchasers on approved security, eight Trustees were appointed, and the transfer of the site was in due course effected. The names of the Trustees were, Philip Embury, William Lupton, Charles White, Richard Sause, Henry Newton, Paul Heck, Thomas Taylor, and Thomas Webb. The following is a copy of the “Preamble of the Subscription List :”—“A number of persons, desirous to worship God in spirit and truth, commonly called Methodists (under the direction of the Rev. Mr John Wesley), whom it is evident God has been pleased to bless in their meetings in New York, thinking it would be more to the glory of God and the good of souls had they a more convenient place to meet in, where the gospel of Jesus Christ might be preached without distinction of sects or parties, and, as Mr Philip Embury is a member and helper in the gospel, they humbly beg the assistance of Christian friends in order to enable them to build a small house for the purpose, not doubting but the God of all consolation will abundantly bless all such as are willing to contribute to the same.” Thus were preliminary steps taken, in humble dependence upon the Divine blessing to crown the work, for the purpose of rearing the first Methodist Chapel in the Western World.

No sooner had the idea of building a suitable sanctuary for these stray sheep in the wilderness been carried to a practical issue, than the enemies of the Cross directed their forces against the little band of earnest Christians and their laudable undertaking. Even professedly Christian ministers uttered a curse against them ; but God turned their cursing into blessing. Rising superior to every adverse circum-



stance, Embury and his congregation proceeded towards the completion of the work. Opposition incited them to redoubled efforts, and could not retard their progress. The Lord's people gave liberally to the building-fund, and in a comparatively short time the sum of £418, 3s. 6d. was paid over to the Treasurer. The List of Subscribers contains nearly two hundred and fifty names, and the several donations range from thirty pounds, given by Captain Webb, down to the offerings, made by negro servants, of two shillings and eighteenpence. In the course of twelve months from the opening of the chapel, the entire cost of its erection had been defrayed, as the following copy of discharge shows : —“ Received, New York, 7th October 1769, of Mr William Lupton, forty-three pounds, which, with the different sums I have before received from Mr Philip Embury, amount to the sum of five hundred and eleven pounds, which is in full of all demands from the Methodist Preaching-House. £511. Samuel Edwards.” Thus did Philip Embury, “in the strength of the Lord and in the power of His might,” lead God's people until, after a series of successes, they were enabled to rear for themselves and their children a commodious house of prayer. It is pleasing also to find, that while the names of men of worldly substance became associated with the first American Society in its more advanced state, those of Philip Embury and Barbara Heck continued to occupy a prominent and distinguished position. To Barbara is the honour given of having conceived the plan according to which the famous building known as the “Cradle of American Methodism” was erected ; while Embury was not only the first Wesleyan Preacher and Class-Leader, but also the first Methodist Trustee and Treasurer, in America ! These unpretending Palatine friends and companion-emigrants had stood by the cause of pure and undefiled religion at a most critical period ; they had jointly



watched and nursed the growth of the infant Church which had been planted through their instrumentality; and they were mutually blessed in the consciousness of their devotion and labour of love having been accepted and honoured by the Almighty.

The chapel was sixty feet in length, and forty-two in breadth. The walls were built of stone, covered with tinted plaster. On the ground of economy, access to the gallery was effected by means of a ladder, in lieu of the usual flight of steps; while, for the same reason, the seats were plain forms without backs. The site of the building, in John Street, was first held on lease, till the purchase was completed in the year 1770. The privilege of erecting "regular churches" had not yet been extended to Dissenters in the city of New York; consequently the chapel was provided with a fireplace and chimney, so as to avoid collision with "the powers that be." Although the interior was not finished for some time after the opening services, diligent hands gave to it an appearance of tidiness and comfort, while the floor was sprinkled with snow-white sand. The wood-work was executed by Embury himself, assisted by a brother craftsman named David Morris. The Preacher constructed the pulpit which his own labours in the gospel had given occasion to rear, and good Barbara Heck took pleasure in whitewashing the walls of the humble temple which claimed her as its architect. On the 30th October 1768—a day memorable in the history of Wesleyan Methodism—the first chapel in the world that bore the name of "Wesley" was dedicated to the worship of God with devotional gratitude. Embury preached the opening sermon, from the words in Hosea x. 12:—"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you." With the simplicity which was in him a natural characteristic, he said,



“The best consecration of a pulpit is to preach a good sermon in it.” If any reliance is to be placed on the opinion of those who regularly attended his ministry, Embury’s talents as a Preacher were of a high order, and his reputation became confirmed and extended after the “Cradle of American Methodism” had been appropriately set apart for the glory of God and the good of humanity, by the pious and gifted Lay-Pastor.

Wesley Chapel, John Street, New York, was now the recognised headquarters of the Society, the historic “Rigging-Loft” being abandoned for the more commodious place of worship which had been called into existence. The new sanctuary speedily became thronged with eager listeners to the “gospel sound.” It is recorded that not less than a thousand persons crowded within it, and the area in front, ere two years had elapsed from the date of its “consecration.” At that time the population of the city was about twenty thousand, while the whole of the British Colonies in America would not contain, probably, more than three millions of souls. It will thus be seen that the tree of Methodism which had been planted by Embury was destined to grow with the numerical growth of the city and the continent, through the blessing of God upon the labours of “the founder,” and those who succeeded him in the important office which he had so honourably and faithfully filled. The Carpenter-Preacher, as we have already noticed, had been earnestly seconded in his schemes for the extension of Christ’s kingdom by his brother, Captain Webb. While the former ministered regularly in the “Rigging-Loft” three times weekly, the latter acted in the capacity of an evangelist to the people on Long Island, and in other parts of the city; and after the opening of Wesley Chapel the same zealous co-operation was manifested in the efforts of the two servants of the Lord. Early in the year 1769,



the revered "father of the Connexion" received a communication relative to the position and prospects of the American Church, in which the writer said, concerning Philip Embury and his coadjutor in the gospel, "The Lord carries on a very great work by these two men." As the members and adherents of the infant Church increased, however, the want of an ordained ministry began gradually to be felt, and Wesley was urgently requested to send out labourers to the harvest-field beyond the waters of the Atlantic. Besides, by the removal of several of the friends to other parts of the country, Methodist doctrines and practices were being spread beyond the confines of the city where they had been fanned into a flame, and it was essentially necessary to the protection of the interests of the truth that duly qualified men should be appointed to look after the spiritual well-being of the early converts, and to carry forward the glorious work which Embury had begun.

The success of the cause of Christ in the chief city of the New World, and its expansion southward, naturally evoked much interest among the Wesleyans of the old country, and their leader was at length enabled to send out the first missionary to his spiritual children in America. In the month of August 1769, the first Itinerant Preacher of the Methodist Connexion arrived in New York. It is true, indeed, that he owed his translation to the Colony in a great measure to the religious zeal of the friend who accompanied him thither—Mr Thomas Ashton "of blessed memory ;" but there cannot be any reasonable doubt that Robert Williams had been duly accredited by Wesley for the important functions he was to perform in the land of his adoption. It is recorded that this eminently successful minister was "the first who issued a Quarterly Ticket in America, the first who published a book, the first of the



heroic band of the Itinerancy, who had the courage to enter the holy estate, and the first of the same noble host who slept in Jesus beneath the green sward of the New World." He was a member of the Irish Conference previous to his setting out on his mission of love to his emigrant countrymen, and the "Minutes" for the year 1766 fixes his appointments in the North-Eastern District of the sister isle. Mr Ashton, his patron and fellow-voyager, was a gentleman of considerable wealth, who went to the neighbourhood of Cambridge, a town north of New York, and there founded a settlement, which he designated "Ashgrove." Upon his arrival, Williams entered with great spirit into the work which was being carried on under the superintendence of Philip Embury; but the latter was not formally released from his office of chief Pastor until about two months later, when Messrs Boardman and Pilmoor came from England to assume powers which had been worthily exercised by the distinguished Lay-Preacher. With a heart full of gratitude to his heavenly Father for past protection, favour, and guidance, Embury terminated his laborious duties in Wesley Chapel, so that he might be able in some measure to make provision for the temporal interests of his family.

Of a retiring nature and modest disposition, he had only put himself forward in answer to the exhortation and entreaties of his sister in the faith, Barbara Heck; and when called upon, for the advantage of the Church, to resign his charge, Embury did so with a feeling of joyful acquiescence. Under his affectionate care the Society had increased in numbers, piety, and influence for good. Commencing with a congregation of five persons, he had so used his talents, that under the blessing of God hundreds of souls demanded spiritual food at his hands, while none that hungered after the truth were sent empty away. With a childlike con-



fidence in the all-sufficiency of Jehovah, he had adapted himself to the ever-changing circumstances by which he had been surrounded while engaged in the active service of the gospel ; he had not only given his assent to worthy schemes which had been proposed by his brethren, but had devoted untiring perseverance to the furtherance and completion of the same ; and he had been the faithful Pastor and diligent Leader of a congregation of Christ's people at a most critical time, and under auspices which were calculated to test his capabilities to the utmost. In the results of his ministry we have abundant cause for thankfulness and praise, and grand incitements to labour for the Lord !

In the year 1770 Embury and his family quitted New York, and proceeded to Camden, Salem, a settlement contiguous to Ashgrove, which had been founded in the previous year by Mr Ashton, as we have before seen. Peter Switzer, Embury's brother-in-law, had already secured in the neighbourhood two hundred acres of land upon advantageous terms ; and the prospects held out to agriculturists by the situation and fertility of the new colony also induced many of the Palatine families to repair thither. Among those who went to Camden were David Embury and Paul and Barbara Heck ; so that, as may readily be supposed, the goodly germs of a thriving Methodist community were clustered together around the homestead of the Local Preacher. Here the secular labour of the latter was abundantly blessed, while his spiritual gifts were not allowed to remain without their sanctified use ; and in the world, as well as in the Church, he was honoured and beloved. By earnest industry and strict integrity, he speedily rose to an influential position among his fellow-men ; and to the sacred office of the Lay-Ministry he added, by the special favour of those around him, the dignity and duties of a magistrate and the title of Squire—a position in the



community somewhat identical with that held by the faithful friend of his youth, Philip Guier. Shortly after his removal to his new home, Embury formed a Wesleyan Society at Ashgrove. The membership was composed, for the most part, of Irish Palatines, and included Thomas Ashton, the principal proprietor, and Paul and Barbara Heck. That Society is historically famous on account of the fact of its being the first that was planted within the limits of the present Troy Conference, which now numbers upwards of thirty thousand members, about three hundred Itinerant Preachers, and an adequate proportion of Lay Brethren.

For the space of three years he continued to labour for the good of those who looked upon him as their spiritual guide ; and although he now occupied a less prominent status in the Church of Christ, his devotion to the Saviour and His cause on earth was not less earnest and genuine than heretofore. So far as man could judge, there seemed a bright and prosperous future in store for him in this world, and a life of eternal felicity laid up for him in the next. Every condition of his existence appeared to be invested with comfort, and out of every circumstance which marked his progress towards the heavenly Canaan he found materials to build an altar of praise and thanksgiving to Jehovah. Wherever he went, his pathway was strewn with blessings. But the cloudless firmament of his daily life was soon to be enshrouded in darkness ; his earthly sun was soon to set in death. On a very sultry day in the month of August 1773, he was engaged with others in the work of mowing one of the fields upon his farm. In the prime of life, muscular and vigorous, he paid no heed to the scorching rays of the orb of day, but put forth his energies with a view to finish as quickly as possible the task he had in hand. His great industry having attracted the attention of some of the mowers, they strove to eclipse, if possible, the efforts of



the Squire ; while, in a good-humoured spirit of emulation, the latter replied to the silent challenge of his helpers by redoubled zeal on the part of himself. The violent exercise which this rivalry had induced brought on an attack of pleurisy, which in a few days terminated his eminently useful and honoured career. In his last moments he was attended by the Rev. Abraham Bininger, a Moravian minister, and an early friend of the Rev. John Wesley. As death approached, the dreadful mien of the "King of Terrors" could not strike with fear the spirit of the Lord's faithful, neither could it shake his confidence in the Almighty Surety. He left a blessed testimony behind him to the goodness, mercy, and love of God, for he died "in the full triumph of that faith which he had preached to others." Thus did Philip Embury, the apostle of Methodism to America, exchange worlds at the early age of forty-five. In the secluded valley of Salem, beneath the shade of a monarch of the forest, was his body committed to the grave by the venerable Abraham Bininger. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them."

After the death of Embury, the worthy Thomas Ashton became the Leader of the Ashgrove Society, and the affectionate host of the Itinerant Preachers during their sojourn in the neighbourhood. On his property a Methodist Cemetery was enclosed, and therein many of the Irish Palatines were "laid to rest," including the pious founder of the colony. Nearly fifty years after the disease of the famous Local Preacher who was the first to unfurl the Wesleyan Standard in New York, the descendants of the generation that had listened to his voice resolved upon the removal of his dust to the beautiful though diminutive Necropolis at Ashgrove. Accordingly, in the year 1832, a



vast assemblage congregated around the huge oak-tree where all that was mortal of Philip Embury had been buried nearly half a century before by the loving hands of his kindred and people. Ere the spade had disturbed the verdant covering of his resting-place, an oration was delivered by the Rev. John Newland Maffitt, an eloquent Preacher and fellow-countryman of him whose memory was honoured on the occasion. The following are some of the more salient points of an address, which was afterwards published and widely circulated :—“ MY BELOVED HEARERS,—In this sequestered spot, where the quiet herds have grazed in peace, where the robin has sung his early song, and the snow-bird played with the descending flakes of winter, even here moulders the frame of a man. Bone after bone hath been returned to the dust from whence man was originally taken. Dig down now, after this lapse of years—dig down now, and see if here we can find EMBURY. Here the grey-haired men of other days laid him—the cold remains of a minister of Jesus—when his day of labour was over. Here one day, when the hearse slowly wound along this path, they gathered, not to see the man of God in his mightiest strength, when the oil of eloquence is on his lips, and the anointing of the Most High shines upon his face, but to see a minister of the New Testament cold and lifeless, as was his Saviour when taken down from the bloody Cross on Calvary. Cold, cold in death, was the pious, warm-hearted Embury when they laid him here. . . . Summer and winter came and went again. The grass grew tall and rank over this mound. It became level with the surrounding earth. The place was fading from the memory of man, for lo ! many who dug and covered this grave went themselves to their last resting-place, and laid their time-wearied heads on that coarse pillow of gravel. . . . I have made these preliminary remarks, suggested as they have been by the strange circum-



stances which have called us together. Not to bury the dead, not to disinter his mouldering remains, have we come together—not to shed a tear over Embury dead ! But to thank God that so good a man ever lived, and to rear a frail stone over his dust, which may tell his name and our reverence for his virtues, for four or five generations yet to come. Then this very marble which we rear to-day shall gather the rust of years—the gnawing tooth of time shall eat away our inscription—and men shall wonder at the ragged fragment of a monument that shall cumber this ground, and guess by what wild chance it strayed away from its native quarry. We come here to-day, after a lapse of years, to rear a monument over one of the nursing-fathers of Methodism in America. . . . No common dust moulders beneath our feet. Here fell a harnessed warrior of the Cross. Embury was the founder of Methodism in New York. We know not his path in another land beyond the blue waves of the Atlantic. He was my countryman, but whether his path was one of light or darkness, of gloom or glory, in his native isle, I know not. But this I know, and record it to his eternal honour, that he was deemed worthy by the Holy Spirit to institute Wesleyanism in the city of New York. . . . Here let me beg the indulgence of my audience, while I take a farewell of the relics of the dead which are so near me. He had, perhaps, no sympathising friend to say, *Farewell, and God be with thee !* in the last hour. The one who echoes his adieu over his grave was not then born : he had not breathed that breath of life which was then departing from Embury. But now, departed shade, I come on my pilgrimage to speak my farewell, and raise a stone above thy ashes. Farewell, my brother ! more than brother, father in God ! Farewell ! until the red morning of the resurrection sparkles over yonder hills, and the tremendous voice of the trumpet shall bid thee come forth



radiant in more beauty than ever earth beheld. Farewell, until I too shall pass to where thou art in thy resting-place of peace. Farewell, until shadows stretch over time with a gloomy magnificence : and the night that knows no breaking sets in upon me. Farewell, my countryman ! more than mine, the countryman of Jesus, a chosen vessel of His love, an instrument in His mighty hand of planting the precious seeds of the eternal kingdom on these Western shores, in the trying early times. Often in the journey of life shall my memory revert to this scene—often shall I remember the once unknown and undistinguished grave. Often shall I gather, departed shade, from these memorials, a precious lesson of the eternal care of the Saviour over the wasting dust of His chosen. How shall I learn how worthless is time, how precious is eternity ! Travelling back from future times, my memory will often repose on the spot where thou, my father, resteth in the full glory of recompense. And now, till we meet, Farewell ! . . . . But see ! a heavenly form breaks forth from the dust beneath our feet, scattering the soil of centuries from his radiant brow, and, fresh in the glow of a young immortality, Embury rises to the resurrection of the just. This is the day he long looked for, and thought of, and warned sinners of, when he was in life. It has come ! He no longer needs a frail slab of marble to mark the spot of his grave, for now he is known as far as immortal souls can glance their untiring eyes,—as far as the accents of Jesus' voice can echo his welcome. No more he fills a stranger's grave. No more he needs the eulogy of a man he never saw. No more he labours at his trade, for he has, through the strength of the Lord Jesus, wrought out a crown of eternal life, and he now takes it from the hands of celestial ones, who kiss his death-cold brow into the warmth of a beautiful immortality. Let me die the death, that I may wear the crown, of Embury. Let me live the life, that



I may win the Spirit-watched grave, of my departed countryman." Maffitt's address produced an impression of the most marked character among his auditory ; and at its conclusion the ashes of Embury were silently deposited in the picturesque cemetery at Ashgrove. A simple marble tablet, bearing the following inscription, was erected over the dust of God's servant :—

PHILIP EMBURY,

THE EARLIEST AMERICAN PREACHER OF THE METHODIST  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH, HERE FOUND HIS LAST  
EARTHLY RESTING-PLACE.

"PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD IS THE DEATH OF HIS  
SAINTS."

BORN IN IRELAND, AN EMIGRANT TO NEW YORK, EMBURY  
WAS THE FIRST TO GATHER A CLASS IN THAT CITY,  
AND TO SET IN MOTION A TRAIN OF MEASURES  
WHICH RESULTED IN THE FOUNDING OF  
JOHN STREET CHURCH, THE CRADLE  
OF AMERICAN METHODISM,  
AND THE INTRODUCTION  
OF A SYSTEM WHICH  
HAS BEAUTIFIED  
THE EARTH WITH SALVATION  
AND INCREASED THE JOYS OF HEAVEN.

The remains of this honoured Wesleyan Local Preacher were first interred upon the farm of his friend Peter Switzer, his only monument being the stately oak whose branches threw a shadow over the lonely grave. As we have seen, an exhumation took place in the year 1832, and in the neighbouring Methodist burying-ground the fragments of Embury's earthly tabernacle found a second place of rest. As years rolled on, the progress of civilisation ever and anon called great centres of population and industry into entity where formerly had existed only obscure emigrant settlements. From this cause the humble cemetery at Ashgrove



was threatened with annihilation, while nobler "cities of the dead" were being created beside the more luxurious habitations of the living. Under such circumstances, younger sons of the Church which had been founded by the Irish Lay-Pastor judged it expedient to remove once more the dust of their revered spiritual progenitor. Accordingly, under the auspices of the Troy Conference, which met at Cambridge in the month of April 1866, a day was appointed for the carrying out of a design which had been prompted by a spirit of sacred veneration. All the members of the Conference were present at the ceremony of removal; which was also witnessed by an immense number of citizens as well as friends of the denomination. The spot selected for the purpose is at Cambridge, and is surrounded by natural beauties of a high order. After prayer had been offered up by the Rev. John Pegg, appropriate addresses were delivered by Bishop Janes and the Rev. S. D. Brown. The following is extracted from that by the worthy Bishop, who said, "This tree of Methodism has grown in one hundred years, so that it now not only casts its shade over the whole of this land, but many others sit also in its shadow. But here was its beginning in this *God-educated, God-empowered* Local Preacher, upon whose ashes we gaze to-day; and if I had before me to-day all the Methodists of this land, I would say to them, that when you depart from the simple but vital, God-approved truths and faith, which Embury preached and exercised, you largely lose your power for good. . . . This occasion illustrates another truth, that the way of duty is the path to *true honour*. Read up carefully the history of our race, and you will find that those persons who have come to the possession of true and immortal fame are those who have simply done their duty in their respective spheres. Men have sometimes gained notoriety by other than dutiful or good deeds; but



where is undying reputation, immortal honour to be found? Ministers in our own Church, who have sought distinction and honour in the ministry by seeking this place or that place, have sometimes in a measure and for a time succeeded—but to-day they are forgotten; while the memory of this humble Local Preacher lives, and shall live while the world endures, all because he did his duty in his identical place.”

When the Revolutionary War broke out, many Methodists of New York and its neighbourhood journeyed to Canada, where they ultimately settled, and became the heralds of glad tidings. Thus, by the overruling providence of Jehovah, was the seed of the gospel of Christ carried beyond the limits of the field where it had germinated. But while distant parts of the vast Continent of America were rejoicing in the truth which had been brought nigh unto them through the instrumentality of the Wesleyan Pilgrims, God was not left without witnesses in the city where a habitation had been built for the honour of His name. When New York was in the possession of a portion of the British Army, for want of other accommodation for the troops, every Church was converted into barracks, with the single exception of *Wesley Chapel in John Street*, “the Cradle of Methodism.” In the eyes of the law the humble sanctuary was not a “regular Church,” and consequently could not be used by the authorities for the purpose in question; while the services were continued without the slightest interruption, or any inconvenience being occasioned to the worshippers. Besides, as it was the only available place for public worship, it was constantly thronged by multitudes of eager seekers after the truth; so that the cause of Methodism prospered exceedingly, not only by means of the increased collections which were taken, but also by reason of the great accession to the number of adherents connected with the famous chapel.



The labours of Philip Embury produced results of the most stupendous character. As a preacher of the gospel he had no doubt many seals to his ministry ; but the value of his services cannot be estimated by their immediate fruits. Only when we consider the position, influence, and prospects of the Methodist Churches in the United States and Canada can we form a just opinion regarding the importance of his work, and his title to a foremost place among the good and truly great. A century after his first sermon had been preached in the little cottage in Barrack Street, eight millions of persons were more or less under the constraining power of Methodistic teaching. The following statistics, compiled about the year 1866, and given by the Rev. Dr Stevens of New York, the learned historian of the Methodist Episcopal Church, are interesting, and establish the truthfulness of our remarks :—“ Embury’s little congregation of five persons, in his own house, has multiplied to thousands of Societies, from the northernmost settlements of Canada to the Gulf of Mexico—from Nova Scotia to California. The first small Conference of 1773, with its 10 Preachers and its 1160 reported members, has multiplied to 60 Conferences, 6821 Itinerants, 8205 Local Preachers, and 928,320 members in the METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH alone, exclusive of the Southern, the Canadian, and Minor branches : all the offspring of the Church founded in 1766, and episcopally organised in 1784. It has property in *Churches and Parsonages* amounting to about twenty-seven millions of dollars. It has 25 *Colleges and Theological Schools*, with property amounting to three millions and fifty-five thousand dollars ; 158 Instructors, 5345 Students ; and 77 Academies, with 556 Instructors, and 17,761 Students : making a body of 714 Instructors, and an army of 23,106 Students. Its *Church Property* (Churches, Parsonages, and Colleges, aside from its 77



Academies, and Book Concern), amounts to thirty millions and fifty-five thousand dollars. Its *Book Concern* has a capital of eight hundred and thirty-seven thousand dollars; 500 Publishing Agents, Editors, Clerks, and Operatives, with some thirty cylinder-power presses in constant operation; about 2000 different Books on its catalogue, besides Tracts, &c. ; 14 Periodicals, with an aggregate circulation of more than a million copies per month. Besides the above, it has 5 Independent or non-official Weekly Papers, with immense circulation. Its *Sunday-School Union* comprises 13,400 Schools; more than 150,000 Instructors; nearly 918,000 Pupils; and more than two millions and a half of Library Books. It issues nearly 2500 Publications, besides a monthly circulation of nearly 300,000 numbers of its Periodicals. Its *Missionary Society* has 1059 Circuits and Stations; 1128 Paid Labourers; and 105,675 Communicants. The METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH, has published no statistics since the Rebellion broke out: it has doubtless suffered much by the war, but it reported the last year before the Rebellion nearly 700,000 Church Members; nearly 2600 Itinerants; and 5000 Local Preachers. It had 12 Periodical Publications; 12 Colleges and 77 Academies, with 8000 Students. Its *Missionary Society* sustained at home and abroad about 360 Missionaries; and 8 Manual Labour Schools, with nearly 500 Pupils. According to these figures, the two great Episcopal divisions of the denomination have had, at their latest reports, 1,628,320 Members; 9421 Travelling, and 13,205 Local, Preachers; with 191 Colleges and Academies, and 31,106 Students. The CANADA WESLEYAN CHURCH was not only founded by, but for many years belonged to, the Methodist Episcopal Church. It now reports more than 56,000 Members; 500 Itinerant Preachers; and 750 Sunday-schools, with about 45,000 Pupils; a University; a Female College; and a Book Concern, with its



Weekly Periodical. Another branch of Canadian Methodism, the METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CANADA, equally the child of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, reports 3 Annual Conferences; 2 Bishops; 216 Travelling, and 224 Local, Preachers; and 20,000 Members a Seminary and Female College, and a Weekly Newspaper. The CANADIAN WESLEYAN METHODIST NEW CONNEXION CHURCH reports 90 Travelling, and 147 Local, Preachers and 8450 Communicants. It sustains a Weekly Paper, and a Theological School. The other Methodist bodies in the United States are, the METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH, the AMERICAN WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH, the AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, and some three or four smaller sects; their aggregate Membership amounts to about 260,000, their Preachers to 3423. Adding the Travelling Preachers to the Membership, there are now in the United States about 1,901,164 Methodist Communicants. Adding three non-communicant members of its congregations for each communicant, it has under its influence 7,604,636 souls—between one-fifth and one-fourth of the whole national population. Aggregately, there are now in the United States and Canada, as the result of the Methodism of 1766, 1,972,770 Church Members, 13,650 Travelling Preachers, 15,000 Local Preachers, nearly 200 Colleges and Academies, and more than 30 Periodical Publications 1,986,420 Communicants, including preachers, and nearly EIGHT MILLIONS OF PEOPLE!" When we take into account the facts that the Eastern Canadian Methodists are not included in the foregoing returns, and that upwards of eighty years have elapsed since the American Methodist Centenary to which period the statistics apply, well may we exclaim, "What hath God wrought?"

The memory of the good Pioneer of Methodism in America cannot be dissociated from the fruits of his faith,



devotion, and zeal which we have just enumerated. The advantages conferred upon humanity through his humble means ended not with his life on earth, but will continue throughout all time, and be fully realised only in eternity. He was a hero in the truest sense of the word. Having conquered self, he was enabled to bring a continent under the sway of the Prince of Peace. By the inherent meekness of his nature he was, to some extent, unfitted to assume the position of a great leader of men; and yet at the call of duty he put aside personal feelings, instincts, and desires, and boldly stood in the breach, with his face to the foe. When inclination would have led him to take the obscure path of the individual believer, the obligation of the law of Christ demanded his services in the most prominent office which a follower of the Redeemer can be called upon to fill, and these were not denied. When his compatriots had, for the most part, been seduced by the allurements of the world, he maintained his godly integrity, and not only sought to honour his Maker by attending the public ordinances of His house, but also erected an altar in his own household to the praise of Jehovah. He would have been content to remain as the ministering Levite in the sanctuary of his family, but God called him to be as a High Priest in the Church, and he obeyed the mandate of his Lord. His talents as a Preacher were undoubtedly great. In a letter from the Rev. William Case, of Canada, to the Rev. Dr Bangs, the following passage occurs:—"A few years since I visited John Embury and his worthy companion. He was then ninety-eight years old. The scenes of early Methodism in New York were vivid in his recollection, and he referred to them as readily as if they had recently occurred. He said, 'My uncle, Philip Embury, was a great man—a powerful Peacher—a very powerful Preacher. I had heard many ministers before, but nothing reached my



heart till I heard my uncle Philip preach. I was then about sixteen. The Lord has since been my trust and portion. I am now ninety-eight. Yes, my uncle Philip was a great Preacher!" The correctness of this estimate of the Lay Pastor's power in the pulpit is fully borne out by the opinion of those who were in no way related to him, save by the ties of a common faith. And what of the scenes of his labours? The "Rigging Loft" has been displaced by modern city improvements, while walking-sticks have been formed of the timbers with which it was built. On the site of the "Cradle of American Methodism" now stands a more imposing building, likewise dedicated to the worship and service of the Almighty. Other able men herald the truth within its walls, and throughout the length and breadth of Philip Embury's adopted country. When the lives and actions of many illustrious men are forgotten in the lapse of time, the name of the honoured Balingran Farmer will appear as

"One of the few—the immortal names,  
That were not born to die."



*LOCAL PREACHERS AND THE MISSIONS OF  
METHODISM.*

A MISSIONARY spirit has ever characterised the Local Preachers of Methodism. In conformity with the Divine injunction, they have not looked "every man on his own things," nor sought their own profit, "but the profit of many, that they *might* be saved." To advance the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom they have undertaken duties of the most onerous nature, and in the prosecution of their laborious toil they have endured much self-sacrifice, braved the greatest difficulties, and overcome the most direful foes; while in some cases their notable careers have been terminated by martyrdom. Whatsoever of physical strength, of mental ability, of earthly substance they possessed, have been gladly laid by them under tribute to the work of winning souls for Christ. Thus have they sought to make known to their neighbours, friends, and acquaintances the truth as it is in Jesus. Thus the gospel was introduced to many of the scattered villages, crowded towns, and cities of Great Britain. In their ranks, indeed, have been found those who were pioneers of Methodist doctrines to the uttermost parts of the earth. They landed upon the shores of the West India Islands, climbed the banks of Newfoundland, traversed the United States of America, settled themselves in Canada, trod the spicy groves of Ceylon, knocked at the gates of China, proclaiming everywhere the glorious gospel of the ever-blessed God; and as the result, thousands were "turned from darkness to light,



and from the power of Satan unto God." Viewed in connection with their travels over vast tracts of country, together with the gracious influences that accompanied their ministrations, and the uniformly blessed results which crowned their Christian efforts, no band of labourers in the Lord's vineyard (excepting, perhaps, those of the first century) will compare with the Local Preachers of the early days of Methodism.

In this they were true followers of the Founder of Methodism. Wesley was pre-eminently a missionary. The economy of the Church that bears his name, is also essentially missionary in its character. Adapted to the wants of the human race, and regulated by wise yet simple laws, Wesleyan Methodism is destined to reach the remotest regions in the universe. But whilst we study the nature of Methodist polity, remembering that its usages and institutions were established in the providence of God, we cannot fail to perceive in it a reflex of the mind of Wesley—the greatest ecclesiastical legislator of his age. "The missionary spirit," says one, "was a passion in the Wesley family, when Christian missions scarcely existed. John Wesley, the grandfather of the Wesleys, after being ejected from his church living in 1662, longed to go as a missionary, first to Surinam, and afterwards to Maryland. Samuel Wesley, his son, when between thirty and forty years of age, formed a magnificent scheme to go as a missionary to India, China, and Abyssinia, and in the last year of his life most sincerely lamented that he was not young enough to go to Georgia. His sons John and Charles, then at Oxford, caught his spirit, and actually went to Georgia, John Wesley having it particularly in view to preach the gospel to the American Indians." Although his purpose to preach Christ to the heathen was frustrated, yet his heart yearned over them, and when practicable, suitable



operations were ordained, and vigorously prosecuted, in order that they might be turned from idols to serve the living God. With a zeal proportioned to the task, he sought to bring the human family around the Cross. In the spirit that animated the Apostles, the Martyrs, and the Reformers of Christianity, he laboured not for the special success of a particular section of the Church, but for the good of mankind. Hence his catholic exclamation, when the churches of London and Bristol had been closed against him, "The world is my parish!" Hence, likewise, his directions to those who desired to serve him in the gospel, to "go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most." It was his ceaseless effort and burning charity for souls, more than his scholarly attainments, though these were exceptionally great, which gave distinctiveness, power, and beauty to his character, and rendered his life so fruitful of blessing to the world. Moreover, if we trace the origin and progress of the Missionary Societies of the eighteenth century, we shall find that in conjunction with his fellow-labourers, and chiefly with Dr Coke, he promulgated not only the doctrines of the gospel in foreign lands, but introduced also the more prominent features of modern missionary schemes. Ellis, in his "History of the London Missionary Society," observes:—"The Wesleyan Missionary Society was founded in 1817, but *the first Wesleyan missionaries*, who went out under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr Coke, *entered the British Colonies in 1786*. The Baptist Missionary Society was established in 1792; the London Missionary Society 1795, and the Edinburgh or Scotland, and the Glasgow Missionary Societies, in 1796. The subject of Missions also engaged the attention of many pious persons belonging to the Established Church, besides those connected with the London Missionary Society, and by members of that communion the Church Missionary Society



was organised in the first year of the present century." Thus the spirit manifested by Wesley was caught by others. First one Society was instituted and then another, until, in course of time, numerous agencies, fitting and strong, were established in Great Britain, while Christians of every denomination strove simply to promote peace upon earth, goodwill towards men, and "glory to God in the highest." More or less, the missionary spirit of this great man influenced every one with whom he came into contact. Nevertheless, we do not so read his history as to overlook his faithful fellow-labourers the Local Preachers, who taught salvation by faith to thousands of perishing souls in every part of the globe. Baptized into the death of Christ, these devoted men did not forget that "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them and rose again," but propagated, wherever they went, the truths of our glorious Christianity. Whilst their father in the gospel was journeying throughout England, everywhere preaching successfully to crowded congregations, and also skilfully directing the affairs of established Societies, these men were winning converts, forming additional Societies, and extending the borders of Methodism in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. No one, we imagine, can study their characters, and fail to trace in them lines of beauty, nor can he who reads the story of their lives be unmoved by the recital of their acts of self-denial, and their devotion to duty.

In Brackenbury we are furnished with an exhibition of humility, when he leaves his home in Lincolnshire (Raithby Hall) to live with the poor fishermen of the Channel Islands, so that he may instruct them in the ways of God. In Webb there is presented to us an instance of Christian heroism, when he, a lieutenant in the army, preached in the "Rigging Loft" at New York, to some of the poor resi-



dents of the city. Black Harry, of the island of St Eustatius, illustrated the strength of Divine grace in confessing Christ under the persecutor's lash, and continued faithful when exiled from his adopted country. And in M'Carty, one of the first Preachers in Canada, we see excessive labours followed by a violent end, for he was decoyed away by his enemies, and never afterwards seen. These instances of exemplary conduct, of laborious toil, of extreme suffering, together with the gracious results of their labours, exhibit the great value of Lay Agency, and its important position in the Church. In order, however, that the work of Local Preachers may be duly appreciated, we shall now refer to some of those missions which they commenced, and endeavour to describe some of their labours. The first sphere of missionary effort to which we direct the attention of the reader is the

#### ISLE OF MAN.

Nearly equi-distant from England, Ireland, and Scotland, this island is not difficult to approach; yet Methodism was there unknown until the year 1775. The manner in which it was introduced, the person by whom its doctrines were first promulgated, together with the gracious results attending the preached Word, display alike the wisdom and beneficence of Him "who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Circumstantially, the story of its introduction to the Manx people is full of interest. One of the residents on the island removed to Liverpool, where he became the partaker of saving grace, and there also he entered the Wesleyan Society. Himself a believer in Christ, he felt solicitous for the spiritual wellbeing of his friends, and the people generally with whom he had been associated. This desire, accompanied with a description of the lost condition of the people on the island, was pressed upon the attention of



the Leaders of the Society at Liverpool, who recognised the expediency, and accepted the responsibility, of sending the gospel to them. But the medium by which the tidings of salvation were to be proclaimed to the Manxmen was not easily secured. One person only appeared to be suitable for the work, and he was a Class-Leader and Local Preacher in the Circuit. John Crook, the Brother referred to, was a man of solid piety, good parts, polished manners, and, above all, of a truly apostolic spirit ; but he deemed himself incompetent to discharge the proposed duties. Obedient to the voice of the Church, however, he prepared himself for the noble enterprise, and at the beginning of the year 1775—being then thirty-three years old—he visited the island, arriving at Douglas on Sunday, 11th March 1775. He at once opened his commission as an ambassador of the King of kings. After announcing to the people the object of his visit, he preached his first sermon in the Court-house, which had been kindly granted to him by the authorities. The attendance at the morning service was small, but that in the evening was more numerous than the room could accommodate, and he therefore preached to the people in the open air. A stranger in a strange land, and with but little money in his pocket, his position was not an enviable one ; but first a warm-hearted Irishman offered him accommodation, and then an hospitable Scotchman proffered his assistance, so that, in the good providence of God, he was quickly surrounded by friends.

The work having been thus begun, John Crook laboured sedulously, and with expectation for the blessing of God upon his labours. His position, however, was not without its difficulties. Intent especially upon reclaiming the masses of the people from the thralldom of sin, he adapted his discourse to their mental capacities ; but to his surprise



his congregations were not only composed of the poor, the ignorant, and the extremely wicked, but the rich and learned of the town also waited upon his ministry, the presence of whom called for careful expression, as well as for practical and pointed sermons. As a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, he directed his earnest appeals now to the profligate in his rags, then to the ecclesiastic in his robes: to the humblest subject in the dependency, as well as to the governor of the island, each of whom not unfrequently listened to him. The state of morals amongst the inhabitants was deplorable. Degraded to a degree, men and women alike publicly disgraced their name, while everywhere on the island there was manifested a total disregard of the essence and spirit of true religion. Against many heathenish customs which prevailed, the Local Preacher lifted his voice. With all-prevailing faith he pleaded with God on behalf of sinners. Satan, in retaliation, incited his emissaries to acts of violence against the man of God. Wicked men sought to misrepresent his doctrines, to destroy his reputation in libellous ballads, and to excite in him fears by creating lawless mobs. But at last truth was victorious. Ere six months had elapsed, he was enabled, through the Divine blessing upon his work, to write thus in his diary, "Come to Castletown. . . . Twelve people had come to meet in Class last Sabbath. . . . After preaching (at Peel), I met our Class; and found, blessed be God, that they are doing well." At Douglas, Bally Sally, and other places also, the persecuted cause had been established, and this was but the commencement of great results. Speedily other Classes were formed, and the numbers of the first Societies were augmented; while from amongst the new converts were found some who became able ministers of the gospel in the native tongue of the people.

In June 1776, being then an Itinerant Preacher, Crook



writes, "The blessed work still continued to go on and increase, but there were many adversaries. The more God comforted His Church, so much the more did the gainsayers rage : speaking all manner of evil, sometimes against the subjects of the work of God, sometimes against me. I have nights of rejoicing and nights of sorrowing, and these contrary passions of joy and sorrow, hope and fear, took sleep from my eyes. I had now upon me the care of all the Societies in the island, and if God had not been peculiarly helpful to me, I must have sunk under the burden." Thus did this champion of Christianity bear the standard of the Cross in the midst of the enemy ; thus, by the power of Divine might, did he triumph over the foes of the wicked one, and added many trophies to the Kingdom of Christ. Mainly by his instrumentality Societies had been formed, chapels built, and forces utilised, till Methodism attained fair proportions on the island. Five years from the date (1781) of his landing at Douglas, the number of members in the Society was nearly sixteen hundred. Well might John Wesley exclaim, as he looked over this well-watered and fruitful field, "Having now visited the island round, east, south, north, west, I was thoroughly convinced that we have no such Circuit as this either in England, Scotland, or Ireland. It is shut up from the world, and having little trade, is visited by scarce any strangers. Here are no Papists, no Dissenters of any kind, no Calvinists, no disputers. Here is no opposition, either from the governor (a mild, humane man), from the Bishop (a good man), or from the bulk of the clergy. One or two of them did oppose for a time, but they seem now to understand better ; so that we have now rather too little than too much reproach, the scandal of the Cross having for the present ceased. The natives are a plain, artless, simple people, unpolished—that is, unpolluted ; few



of them are rich or genteel, the far greater part moderately poor, and most of the strangers that settle amongst them are men that have seen affliction. The Local Preachers are men of faith and love, knit together in one mind and one judgment. They speak either Manx or English, and follow a regular plan, which the assistant gives them monthly. The isle is supposed to have thirty thousand inhabitants: allowing half of them to be adults, and our Societies to contain one or two-and-twenty hundred members, what a fair proportion is this ! What has been seen like this in any part either of Great Britain or Ireland ?” According to the last census the population of the island is 53,867. Of that number two thousand five hundred and seventy-three are members of the Wesleyan Society, many more attending her ministry, while no inconsiderable number of children are taught in her Sunday-schools.

#### CHANNEL ISLANDS.

Under remarkable circumstances was Methodism introduced to these islands, which are situated principally in St Malos’ Bay, near the coast of France, and are named respectively Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney, Sark, Jethou, and Herme. Formerly they belonged to Normandy, and at the time of the Conquest they were annexed to Britain, but the ancient laws have still been retained. Before the introduction of Methodism the inhabitants knew scarcely anything of gospel truth. When, indeed, these benighted ones were addressed on the necessity of a Divine change, they deemed the speaker to be a madman. But their opposition to religion was but a natural adjunct to the carnality of their minds. Bitter and continuous was the persecution that the Methodists endured at their hands. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, the message of salvation was delivered to them by one of the residents of Jersey, Mr



Pierre Le Sueur. This gentleman owned an estate on the coast of Newfoundland, and employed numbers of the fishermen of that province. On one of his periodical visits to North America, in the interests of his business, he heard the Rev. Lawrence Coughlan and Mr Pottle, a zealous Local Preacher, and under their ministrations he was convinced of sin, and his own utterly ruined condition by nature and practice. Troubled in spirit, he returned to Jersey, but soon fell into such a state of despondency that his relatives concluded that he was almost hopelessly imbecile. Persecuted by his neighbours, and wretched in himself, he exclaimed, "I see nothing in my temporal affairs but sure and inevitable ruin for myself and family, if I follow these convictions." At this period it was suggested to his mind, "Give up all, and thou shalt find all." In simple faith he gave up all to God unreservedly, ejaculating, "Come racks, come gibbets, come flames, come fire, poverty, shame, or whatever else it may please God to permit, I am His!" Happily, John Tantin, who had been converted to God in Newfoundland, came to the island about this time, and uniting with him, Le Sueur pleaded yet more earnestly for the Divine favour. Soon he obtained the blessing which he craved. While engaged in private devotion, the fetters with which he had been bound were broken, and his soul was filled with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Now he was supremely happy. First to his wife, who had ridiculed his fastings, tears, and prayers, he declared the goodness of the Lord, showing her the necessity of repentance for sin, and faith in the being, mercy, and love of God. Nor was his counsel in vain, for she saw and felt her lost condition, desired her husband and Tantin to pray with and for her, and ceased not to call upon God until she was enabled to cry, "Abba, Father," "my Lord and my God." But this gracious work was not to terminate here. Joining in Chris-



tian fellowship, and co-operating for the salvation of their neighbours, Le Sueur and Tantin exhorted others to repent and turn to the Lord; and so powerful was the word spoken, that within the course of one week twelve persons were earnestly seeking pardon through the blood of Christ. But while they were doing diligent service, Satan was directing his children into a course of persecution, and inciting them to deeds of violence. Mr Le Sueur was "forsaken by all; his house was shunned and despised, as if infested with a plague; the vilest of the vile were ashamed even to be seen in his presence, and none dared to buy or sell or have any transactions of business with him." Notwithstanding the loss of friends and of trade, with consequent straits, he and his friend Tantin persevered in their missionary toil. In course of time Le Sueur began to preach, and many were the saved of the Lord. Thus was the leaven of the truth laid in Jersey, where it has ever since spread.

In the year 1779, the Lay-Preacher and his helper were encouraged and assisted in their mission of mercy by Captain Brown, of Poole, Dorsetshire, who had come to the island with a cargo of cattle for the troops. Landing at Jersey, he soon made the acquaintance of Le Sueur, to whom he gave great assistance in establishing a regular service in St Heliers: the Englishman preaching in his native tongue, and the Jersey citizen in French. Shortly afterwards, Mr Bestland, a blind man, was induced by Captain Brown to visit the growing Society, and preach the Word. His stay was not of long duration, and the little community was left in the sole charge of Mr Le Sueur. Such was the condition of the infant Church in 1783, when a regiment of soldiers, in which were some pious Methodists, arrived at the island. Feeling the want of an earnest preacher themselves, and desirous of saving their fellow-



men, these Christian soldiers, after consulting with Le Sueur on the subject, wrote to Jasper Winscom, a Local Preacher at Winchester, for help. Winscom sent the letter to Mr Wesley, saying, "It appears to me, if you can send a Preacher acquainted with the French tongue, it will open a door perhaps much further than those islands." Providentially, Robert Carr Brackenbury, Esq., a gentleman of fortune, liberality, and piety, and an eminent Local Preacher, was present when Mr Wesley received the note, and when made acquainted with its contents, offered to go himself. He therefore embarked at Southampton for Jersey, taking with him Alexander Kilham, his attendant (who was then also a Local Preacher), and in December 1783, commenced his ministry. Having rented a house in St Heliers, Brackenbury gathered those who had been converted, and with the soldiers formed them into a Society. He also went throughout the island preaching Christ, while French and English in their respective tongues rejoiced in the love of God. During the whole of this period the followers of Christ were hotly persecuted. The meetings were interrupted, the windows of the preaching-house were broken, and the preachers were pelted with stones in the street; nevertheless religion flourished in the hearts of the people, Societies were planted in nearly every place on the island. The hired house gave place to a more commodious building, which in turn was followed by a large and handsome chapel.

The gracious work, thus vigorously prosecuted at Jersey, was soon extended to the neighbouring islands of Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark. The door to Guernsey was opened in the following manner. Pierre Arrive, who traded between Guernsey and Jersey—being a resident of the former place—often derided his sisters for attending the Methodist chapel. After much reasoning on their part, they prevailed



upon him to attend with them, in order that he might learn for himself the falsity of the reports which had been circulated. Under the sermon he was smitten with conviction, and groaning to be set free from the dominion of evil, he returned to his home. Concerned for the salvation of his own soul, and realising the lost condition of the people, he now invited Mr Brackenbury to preach in Guernsey. After the lapse of several months, Mr Brackenbury paid his first visit to the island, in December 1785. He went with much trepidation, fully expecting to meet with rough treatment from the people ; but, contrary to his gloomy forebodings, he was treated with civility, authorised to preach in several houses, and without annoyance addressed a large number of persons. Shortly after this, a young Local Preacher of Jersey, named Jean de Quetteville, went over to the neighbouring island, and, with blessed results, preached to the people. In this manner did the cause continue to prosper, until, in the summer of 1786, Dr Coke, accompanied by De Quetteville, visited Guernsey, and formed there the first Society. In the same year Mr Wesley was persuaded by reports from thence to send another Preacher, the good and great Dr Clarke. Here, as elsewhere, this eminent scholar exhibited his excellences as a man, his virtues as a Christian, with the courage of a hero, and besides building a commodious chapel in St Peter's, he was instrumental in establishing Methodism in Alderney. Well may we exclaim, "How great a matter a little fire kindleth !" The number of members in the Channel Islands is now three thousand one hundred and sixty-six. But these were not the only fruits of these missions. From the Societies of Guernsey went out the light of the gospel to Normandy, Switzerland, and the valleys of Piedmont. Jean de Quetteville and John Angel took (in 1790) the bread of life to many of the Norman villages ; William Mahy, another Local Preacher,



followed in their train ; while Le Sueur and Ollivier faithfully served in the same parts, as circumstances demanded their presence. Thus were many awakened in the villages of Courseulles, Beuville, Cresserons, Periers, and in other places. Thus also was Methodism first taught in the metropolis of France, while at all times the work of Christ has been assisted, and the number of His labourers augmented, by the Societies of the Channel Islands.

#### SHETLAND ISLANDS.

Not less interesting is the history of Methodism in the Shetland Islands. In close proximity to Scotland, where the light of the gospel has long shone brightly, it would appear at first sight unreasonable to suppose that religion was little known in the islands of Yell and Mainland, Unst, Fula, and Bressay. But such was too truly the case. Although closely united to Scotland and England, and populated by those who spoke the same language and followed the same customs, yet were these islands to a very great extent wrapped in spiritual darkness. In a manner suited to the case, the Almighty prepared the way for the diffusion of gospel light amongst that people. John Nicholson, a Shetlander, entered the army, and after joining his regiment, which was quartered in London, was led to attend the Methodist ministry in the metropolis. The Word was made effectual to the saving of his soul, and he united himself with the Society at Poplar. In the enjoyment of vital piety, he continued in London until the year 1819, when he was obliged by loss of health to obtain his discharge from the regiment, and returned to his native home. His reception in the island was marked by many tokens of kindness from his relatives and former friends, including hospitable attention to his temporal wants. In return, Nicholson, out of the fulness of his heart, spoke



to them of the blessings of religion, and exhorted them to flee from the wrath to come. These conversations and home-sermons were at first strange to the ears of the Shetlanders; but as the discharged soldier continued to preach the gospel of the Kingdom, their minds became enlightened, and they awoke to a sense of their responsibility as immortal beings, and to a perception of their interest in the plan of human redemption. While many of his neighbours were freed from the dominion of sin, others intently listened to his discourses, and with the lapse of time the work of grace became confirmed and enlarged. Accordingly, the earnest wish of a large number of the inhabitants, that Wesleyan Ministers might be sent amongst them, was brought before the Conference. After the subject had been discussed, Dr M'Allum was deputed to visit the islands, and to report to the Conference of the following year. So favourable was his account, and so earnestly did he plead on behalf of the spiritual wellbeing of the people, that not only were two Ministers set apart for the work, but Dr Clarke, who became deeply interested in the Shetlanders, was desired to exercise a personal supervision of the Mission. "A more effectual opening," says the Doctor, "among a numerous, very destitute, and interesting people, I have never witnessed."

Messrs Raby and Dunn, the ministers appointed, landed at Lerwick on the 3d October 1822. They were received with demonstrations of gratitude and joy; and, assisted by John Nicholson, they laboured everywhere with great success. Societies were formed at Lerwick, Walls, and several other places of importance; with the aid of Dr Clarke, suitable chapels were erected at these places, and Methodism, in that otherwise poor district, has borne rich fruit to the glory of God. There are now one thousand six hundred and thirty-three members of the Wesleyan Society in the



Shetland Isles District. In the foregoing statements it will readily be seen, that from causes of an apparently insignificant character there flowed the greatest possible results. Humble and unlearned as many of the Local Preachers have been, they have carried into every condition of life the power of godly living, and, trusting in the strength of Jehovah, they have declared to their countrymen, with marvellous effects, the wonderful works of God. No records of Church history, indeed, are more thrilling than those of early Methodism, when God wrought with the humblest instruments, and the fruits of the harvest exceeded the liveliest hopes of the servants of Christ, while over every gracious result was written, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." In connection with these revivals—real, extensive, and prolonged—we have an illustration of the truth, that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen—yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence."

#### GIBRALTAR.

By a wonderful chain of circumstances, every link of which is beautiful, Methodism was carried to distant lands. Jasper Winscom, a Local Preacher with whom a Society originated in Winchester, was made abundantly useful to many of the soldiers who from time to time were quartered at that city. One of the regiments, containing several pious Methodists, was ordered to Gibraltar in the year 1769. Faithful to their religious profession, they not only continued to unite in Christian fellowship, but conducted public religious services in the fortress, two or three of them, in



turn, expounding the Scriptures to the congregation. Writing to Mr Winscom, on 23d November 1769, one of them says : —“ We have between thirty and forty joined in the Society from the different regiments, besides some townsfolk and one officer. Our proceedings are as follows. We have preaching every night and morning. We have three nights set apart for Class-Meeting after the sermon, and on the Sabbath day, at eight in the morning, two in the afternoon, and six in the evening ; and for our speakers we have Henry Ince of the 11th Regiment, Henry Hall of the Royal Scots, and Brother Morton, under whom the work seems to prosper.” Over the Church so auspiciously situated it was felt that a Missionary was needed, and therefore application was made to Dr Coke for the appointment of a Minister at the Rock. To this earnest request the “ Father of Missions ” could not, for want of gospel labourers, give prompt attention, and it was not until the beginning of the present century that a Missionary was sent to the garrison. In the autumn of 1804, Mr M’Mullen, with his wife and daughter, embarked for Gibraltar. Their voyage was prolonged and dangerous, and after being driven by the storm upon the coast of Barbary, they reached the fortress at the close of September. To the Missionary and his wife this entry into the celebrated garrison was like unto treading the pathway of death. With great violence the yellow fever was raging amongst all classes of the community. Every house almost was the abode of the “ King of Terrors : ” confusion and consternation reigned over all. The Missionary was not exempt from the ravages of the disease. His child, aged six years, was smitten with the fever, but survived. Himself and partner were in succession stricken with the epidemic, and in a few weeks were numbered with the dead. At the first opportunity Miss M’Mullen was sent to England, and placed for a time under the care of Dr



Coke ; but afterwards the girl was received into the house and home of Dr Clarke. Reared and educated in this excellent family, she grew up, not only accomplished, but pious, and in 1819 was united in marriage to the Rev. John Rigg. After beholding the power of the grace of God in her children—one of whom is the Rev. Dr Rigg, Principal of the Westminster Training College—and witnessing a good profession, she died at Southport, 3d June 1869, in the seventy-third year of her age. Her end was peace.

By the death of Mr M'Mullen, the hopes of the infant Church at Gibraltar were sensibly blighted ; yet the members continued to hold meetings, and to sow diligently the seed of the Word. Four years afterwards, in 1808, a Missionary was sent out, and from that time until now Methodism has existed in Gibraltar. The Society numbers at present twenty-five ; but figures in this instance should not be taken as a criterion of success, for the population, military and civilian, is migratory in the extreme. In a missionary sense, Gibraltar is the key to Spain, to Northern Africa, and to the Mediterranean ; and who shall limit the influence for good in the establishment of Methodism there ?

#### WEST INDIES.

No work of fiction, however wonderful its subject, however magnificent its embellishments, can compare with the romantic facts of Christian enterprise. We have abundant evidence of the truth of this in the history of the introduction of Methodism to the West Indies. Situated in an extensive bay, formed by the Atlantic Ocean between the Continents of North and South America, the West India Islands constitute an archipelago interesting to the student of Nature. At the period of their discovery they were for the most part inhabited by aboriginal tribes of savages, named by their Spanish conquerors “ Caribs.” Of a fierce



and independent nature, the natives refused to bear the yoke which their masters sought to force upon them, and in their efforts after freedom they became almost exterminated, while their places were speedily filled by negro slaves, carried by ships of the Spaniards from the African coast. The descendants of those bondmen of an age happily passed away, now people the group of islands, and we have now briefly to consider the mode by which, in the providence of God, the religion of Jesus was made known among them. The Speaker of the House of Assembly in Antigua, who was also the owner of large plantations on that island, visited England in search of health. While in London, he heard several reports relative to the character, career, and doctrines of John Wesley, and intent upon forming his own opinion of that great man, as well as being anxious to learn the true religion, he determined upon hearing for himself the Founder of Methodism. Accordingly, on the 17th January 1758, he repaired to Wandsworth Chapel. The Word preached by Wesley was attended with power, and with the demonstration of the Spirit. The West Indian planter trembled, believed, obeyed, and looking unto Christ, was saved. Nathaniel Gilbert, Esq., the person referred to, became an attendant at the Methodist chapel, and afterwards made the acquaintance of Mr Wesley. Two of Mr Gilbert's slaves were also made participators in the Divine blessing, and were baptized by Mr Wesley—one of them being “the first regenerated African he had seen.”

Happy in the love and favour of the Almighty, and full of holy zeal for His cause, Mr Gilbert returned to Antigua in 1760. Now he looked upon the downtrodden negro with other eyes than those with which he had hitherto beheld him. The African was no longer a mere servant, but a brother. He felt, indeed, that God “hath



made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us." With such feelings he began to speak to his negroes of the things of God. Gathering together as many as possible, he read to them the Scriptures, invoked the Divine blessing, and exhorted them to "flee from the wrath to come." That a man of his exalted station, sustaining, as he did, the dignity of Speaker in the House of Legislation, should preach the gospel, was deemed an act of weakness ; but to associate with and exhort the slaves to repentance and faith, was unpardonable condescension. Undeterred by the sneers of the aristocracy, he endeavoured to raise the moral and intellectual condition of the negroes on his own and other estates, and in a spirit of earnest Christian devotion did he persevere in the course which he had marked out for himself. The hand of the Lord was with him in his labours, and through his instrumentality a Society of nearly two hundred members was formed on the island. But when, to human thought, his services were most needed for the purpose of directing the converts, they were terminated by death. Without their teacher, Leader, and friend, many turned aside from the path of rectitude, some dared not even to profess openly the name of Christ, but the Society was saved from total extinction by the faithful labours of two negresses, named Mary Alley and Sophia Campbell, who continued to hold meetings for prayer.

In this really depressed and unsatisfactory condition the cause existed till the year 1778, when the Almighty raised up another labourer in this part of the gospel vineyard. In consequence of a want of shipwrights at the dockyard in Antigua, application was made to the authorities in



England to send out suitable persons. One of the number engaged for the work was a Wesleyan Local Preacher, named John Baxter, who had been employed at the Royal Dockyard, Chatham. Baxter sailed for Antigua at the first opportunity, and reaching English Harbour in the spring of the year 1778, he found the Society in a very feeble state of existence. Writing to Mr Wesley, on the 2d April 1778, he says:—"I arrived at English Harbour. On Friday the 3d I went to St John, and waited on Mr H——, who received me kindly. The next day Mr H—— went with me to see our friends. The work that God began by Mr Gilbert is still remaining. The black people have been kept together by two black women, who have continued praying and meeting with those who attended every night. I preached to about thirty on Saturday night; on Sunday morning to about the same number, and in the afternoon of the same day to about four or five hundred. The old members desire that I should inform you that you have many children in Antigua whom you never saw. I hope we shall have an interest in your prayers, and that our Christian friends will pray for us. Last Saturday I again visited St John's, and preached to a fashionable company of white women, while the back-room was full of blacks, who are athirst for the gospel. On the following day I preached to a large concourse of people that filled both the house and the yard." Working at the docks by day, and speaking to the people by night, Baxter continued in his work of faith and labour of love, till in 1783 he was enabled to build the first Methodist chapel in the torrid zone. For eight years in succession he laboured indefatigably amongst the negroes, and most gratifying was the sight which presented itself, Sabbath after Sabbath, of hundreds worshipping "the true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent." He had under his spiritual care fifteen hundred and sixty-nine members,



all of whom, with the exception of ten persons, were blacks. Thus, in the providence of God, was founded "West India Methodism—which has extended through all the British Colonies of that archipelago, has become one of the chief means of their negro emancipation, has reached into Africa, and was, in fine, the beginning of all the plans of African evangelisation subsequently prosecuted by the denomination."

The manner in which John Baxter received assistance, and the means by which the Mission was placed on a permanent basis, were equally providential. As the Local Preacher proceeded along the streets of St John, early on the morning of Christmas-day 1786, for the purpose of celebrating the nativity of our Saviour, he was surprised at the sight of a party of four Englishmen coming towards him. On meeting with our Local Preacher, the principal person in the group inquired for Mr Baxter; and what was his astonishment, gratitude, and joy, when he found that the person he accosted was the one of whom he was in quest. The strangers were Dr Coke, Messrs Warrener, Hammett, and Clarke, and they had embarked at Gravesend, September 1786, for Novia Scotia, but after a tempestuous voyage had been driven by adverse winds upon the shores of the West Indies, and, as by the finger of God, were directed to Antigua, which so much needed their services. They accompanied Mr Baxter to the chapel, and when they had entered the humble sanctuary, the Doctor ascended the pulpit and preached with his wonted zeal to a large and attentive congregation. Mr Warrener was left at Antigua, and Mr Baxter gave up his trade and devoted himself exclusively to the work of preaching. Now there are nine thousand five hundred and fifty-nine members in the district.

But the influence of the gospel had extended to other islands besides that of Antigua. At Dominica, Kingston,



St Vincent, and St Christopher, there were pious persons who were either connected with Methodism, or had received good under the ministrations of Mr Baxter. To Dr Coke one course only seemed to be open, and that was to visit these places personally, so that he might give to Mr Wesley a full report of their actual condition. Accordingly, he with his friends visited Dominica on the 7th January, where they found two converted negroes, two soldiers in the barracks, who had been members of Society in Ireland, and a mulatto lady, with whom the Local Preacher of Antigua had been formerly acquainted. From thence they sailed to Kingston, in St Vincent, on the 9th, where they met with Mr Claxton, one of Mr Gilbert's converts, and other gentlemen, who cordially received them, and promised to further their designs ; while, on a subsequent visit, they were offered not only the use of the Court-house, but also the help and support of many persons of position. Here also they found seven pious soldiers, who with six European civilians were formed into a Class. So gratified was Dr Coke with his visit, that he wrote, "In respect to Antigua and St Vincent, all is as clear as if it were written with a sunbeam." Touching again at Dominica, they passed on to St Christopher, at which place the inhabitants had anticipated their visit, and gave them a hearty reception. In each of these islands they preached, sometimes in a private room, occasionally in an outhouse on the plantations, and at other times in the Court-house. Mr Burn, one of the planters, gave the assurance "that he would readily entertain the Missionary that should be sent, that the negroes on his estates should be at liberty to receive instruction, that there were about four hundred slaves in his neighbourhood, and that he doubted not their masters would readily co-operate with him in this benevolent undertaking." This may be regarded in some measure as an index to the



feelings of the more influential inhabitants with whom the Missionaries came into contact. Impressed with the great spiritual wants of the islands, and greatly encouraged by the reception which he had received everywhere during his tour amongst them, Dr Coke felt constrained to provide the people with Preachers, and accordingly appointed Mr Hammett to St Christopher, and Mr Clarke to St Vincent—two most important places. One island alone of the number they visited was closed against the heralds of the truth. St Eustatius they reached on the 24th, taking with them letters of introduction, and expecting favour similar to that shown to them on the sister islands. In this they were, however, painfully disappointed, for an edict had been passed by the Legislative Council, forbidding the preaching of the gospel to the slaves. The events which led to the enactment of such a law were the following. A slave of the name of Harry, previously a Methodist in America, had been sent from that continent to St Eustatius. There he felt the loneliness of his position, in a religious as well as a social sense, and bemoaning the sunken condition of his fellows, he spake to them of the love of God. Speedily conversation with a few led to the exhortation of the many, while under his instrumentality several persons on the island saw and tasted the grace of God. This procedure was met by persecution at the hands of the wicked, and although the Christian slave was for a time protected by the governor from bodily punishment, yet he was eventually subjected to acts of the greatest cruelty. Forbidden to preach because of the powerful effects which his ministry produced in the hearers, he essayed to pray with them in public; but this was equally offensive to the authorities, and in accordance with their resolution he was ordered to be flogged, then imprisoned, and afterwards banished from the island. With heroic fortitude the noble



son of Ham bared his back to the scourger, and in an exhausted condition he was removed by his unmerciful tormentors to his prison. On the expiry of the period of his incarceration, he was banished from St Eustatius. Of his whereabouts nothing was known by his fellow-Christians for a period of about ten years, and his career during that time was wrapped in impenetrable mystery ; but after thousands of prayers had been presented at the Mercy-seat on behalf of this poor man, Dr Coke met with him in America, in the year 1796. "One evening," says the Doctor, "after preaching at a place on the Continent, a black man followed me into my chamber, whom I immediately recognised to be Harry, of St Eustatius. He informed me that the ship in which he was transported from the island had brought a cargo of slaves to the Continent, where he had since resided without being exposed to that brutality which he had suffered in former years. Through all these changes and the lapse of time he seemed to have retained his piety and his zeal. He is useful in the Society of which he is a member, at the prayer-meetings and other private assemblies. And thus an answer has been given from heaven to the petitions of many thousands in England, who at one time, with great fervour, spread his case before the Lord."

It is very remarkable that the day on which Dr Coke landed at the island Harry had been silenced. Learning the position of matters from two converted negroes who had come to the shore expecting to meet the Doctor, he forbore to preach to them till he had obtained permission to do so from the governor. He therefore sought an interview with that dignitary ; but his expostulations were unavailing, and it was deemed necessary to depart without delay from the island. The work of grace, nevertheless, increased amongst the people. So thorough was the change which the gospel



had effected, and such was their devotion to Christ, that, fearless of the lash, they clave to the Lord. By one of Harry's converts the Society was kept intact, and in course of time it was greatly enlarged, while of their number some were deemed qualified to minister the Word. After a lapse of two years Dr Coke revisited the island, when he found two hundred and fifty members in the Society. In 1790 he again visited it, and found eight exhorters employed. Eighteen years after the banishment of Harry, and previous to the death of the "Father of Missions," liberty of worship was granted to these poor people. A Missionary was sent to them, a chapel was built for their accommodation, Sunday-schools were established in their midst, and now they can worship God under their own vine and fig-tree, "none daring to make them afraid."

On the occasion of his second visit to the West Indies, Dr Coke landed at Barbadoes, with Messrs Lamb, Gamble, and Pearce, and there also found that the cause had been established. On landing, the Missionaries learned that there were soldiers in the barracks who had attended the Wesleyan ministry in Ireland; and as they proceeded a military sergeant recognised in one of the party his former minister, whom he embraced with affectionate emotion. A merchant, who had heard Dr Coke in the United States, invited them to dine; and, best of all, they were told that in a large warehouse engaged for Divine worship, the soldiers exhorted and prayed with the islanders. With such prospects, Dr Coke felt justified in leaving his brother Pearce at Barbadoes. In equally favourable circumstances did they find the island of Grenada. Here a Society of about twenty members had been formed by a free mulatto, formerly a consistent member at Antigua. This pleasing circumstance, conjoined with the favour of the principal persons in the island, and the friendship of the Rev. Mr Dent,



a pious clergyman, prepared the way for the appointment of a missionary. At Tortola the earnest wish of the negroes was that they might have there a minister of the gospel; at Santa Cruz every inducement to form a Mission was presented; at Montserrat there were twelve members, who had for their Leader a man of colour, and on almost every island of this vast archipelago the work of the gospel was carried on by instruments of the humblest character. In less than fifty years from the time when Mr Gilbert opened the Mission, Methodism had been firmly established in "the sunny isles of the South," and, ere many more years had elapsed, these dark places of the earth, which had been for ages full of the habitations of cruelty, were turned into fruitful gardens of the Lord. The following table shows the total number of members in the West Indian Societies, according to the Minutes of last Conference :—

	Members of Society.
1. Antigua District, . . . . .	9,559
2. St Vincent, . . . . .	8,439
3. British Guiana, . . . . .	4,255
4. Jamaica, . . . . .	16,085
5. Honduras, . . . . .	1,116
6. Bahama, . . . . .	3,804
7. Hayti, . . . . .	211
Total number of Members, . . . . .	<hr/> 43,469

#### CANADA.

The history of Methodism in Canada exhibits in a remarkable manner the work which Local Preachers have performed as pioneers of Christianity. Successively they exhorted the ungodly in the new settlements to turn from their evil ways and live. The Rev. William Moister, in his work, "A History of Wesleyan Missions," says :—"It is believed that the first Methodist sermon ever heard in



Canada was preached in Quebec, in the year 1780, by a Local Preacher named Tuffey, who had first arrived from England, in connection with the commissariat of the XLIVth Regiment." Impressed with a sense of his responsibility to God, and his duty to his fellow-men, Tuffey boldly exposed the glaring vices of the military, the flagrant sins and lawlessness of the new settlers, and the baneful influences of Popery, while exhorting all to make their peace with God. But though he publicly denounced sin, and mingled with some of his comrades in meetings for prayer, no Methodist Society, at that period, was formed in Quebec. When peace was declared, he returned to England: his Christian companions, in the meanwhile, proceeding to the portions of land which the Government had allotted to them, as a reward for their services. Major George Neal, an Irish Local Preacher, who had entered America with a cavalry regiment, proceeded, like others at the close of the revolutionary war, to his apportionment of land. Crossing the Niagara River at Queenstown, he, on the 7th October 1786, settled in Canada. In his new home he began to preach the gospel. His word was made effectual to the awakening and conversion of many souls. These were speedily gathered into Society, while numerous other Societies were raised in the district. The first meeting-house in that part of the province was erected near to Major Neal's dwelling, and after serving his generation according to the will of God, this Soldier-Preacher fell asleep at a good old age.

Previous to the year 1788, Neal had been the only Methodist Preacher in Canada; but in that year an exhorter of the Methodist Episcopal Church, named Lyons, came to the colony, and opened a school in Adolphustown. He was a true Christian, and as a public-spirited man deplored the wickedness of the people, and soon began to summon them to repentance. To his earnest public ministrations he added



regular visitation from house to house, and engaged in prayer with the families, while the Almighty crowned his labours with abundant success. The first Methodist chapel in Canada was erected at Adolphustown, in the year 1792. In 1788 another remarkable person entered this promising field for spiritual usefulness. This zealous and indefatigable servant of Christ was James M'Carty, a native of the Emerald Isle. Receiving the truth through the instrumentality of the Rev. George Whitfield, while the latter was on his last visit to the United States, M'Carty felt a growing concern for the salvation of his fellow-men. Inspired with holy enthusiasm in the work of preaching, he removed from the United States to Kingston, and from thence to Earnestown, where he met with Robert Perry and other Methodists, in whom he found an identity of feeling towards the cause of Christ. To effect their benevolent designs M'Carty was requested to preach in their log-houses, and to exhort the people in the surrounding district, while his fellow-Christians were collecting the people together, and ministering to the support of the Lay-Preacher. The winning address and earnest piety of the Evangelist, conjoined to the effectiveness of his sermons, were soon made instrumental in the conversion of a large number of the settlers, many of whom had not heard a gospel sermon since they had entered the colony. But in order to put a decisive stop to M'Carty's efforts to lead men to a knowledge of God, the enemies of the Cross resorted to acts of a diabolical character, and after failing to accomplish their purpose by opposition, they conspired to take away his life in a secret and barbarous manner. "He was suddenly seized, thrust into a boat, and conveyed by four Frenchmen, hired for the purpose, down the St Lawrence, to the rapids near Cornwall. He was landed on one of the numerous solitary islands of that part of the stream, and may have perished by starvation, or



have been drowned in attempting to reach the main shore ; but his fate has never been disclosed. The sad mystery has consecrated his name in the history of the Canadian Church. Undoubtedly M'Carty was a martyr for the gospel, and so he was regarded by the early inhabitants." \* Previous to the appearance of Tuffey, Neal, Lyons, and M'Carty, in the province, however, two notable Palatine families had settled in the colony, and, being Methodists, had formed the *first Class in Canada*. Leaving Ashgrove at the commencement of the war, Paul and Barbara Heck, David Embury (brother to Philip), with Samuel Embury (Philip's son), and many more of the Irish Palatines, emigrated to Lower Canada, and after settling in the neighbourhood of Montreal for a short time, they proceeded to Augusta, in Upper Canada, where they formed themselves into Society, appointing Samuel Embury their Leader. In this manner did the Local Preachers open out a way for ministerial service in Canada. They broke the fallow ground, threw in the gospel seed, and assisting their Pastors who were afterwards set apart for the work, they continued to labour in the mission-field till a mighty harvest of souls had been reaped.

#### NOVA SCOTIA.

In the history of the infant Church of Nova Scotia, also, we are furnished with an example of the beneficial effects of Lay Agency. As early as the year 1775, several godly people at Amherst had gathered themselves together for Christian fellowship, prayer, and exhortation. A family of the name of Black, who had emigrated from Yorkshire arrived at Amherst in 1775, and joined with the devout worshippers. William Black, who attended with the other members of his family, was soon made the subject of serious

\* History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, ii. 395, 396.



concern, and after nearly five weeks of anguish of spirit on account of sin, he found rest to his soul. No sooner had he felt the preciousness of believing in Christ, than he sought to make the blessing of salvation known to his friends, and began to tell the matter abroad. At home he conducted regular devotional exercises, and eventually his brothers and sisters found the pearl of great price. Soon after (in 1780), he commenced to exhort multitudes of people at Fort Lawrence, and with abundant success, for two hundred persons were gathered into Classes. Encouraged in the work by seeing sinners converted, he was induced to exercise himself more extensively as an Evangelist; and hence we find him at many places, until he becomes officially recognised as an Itinerant Preacher. Another able and useful Local Preacher, John Mann, arrived at Shelburne in the year 1775, where he was of signal service to many pious persons who had formed themselves into Society. So rapidly, indeed, did the Church grow, that Mann was received into the ministry, while others, fully set apart for the work, were sent to preach in the district, and from that time until now God has had His chosen ones in Nova Scotia.

#### SIERRA LEONE.

Africa also was destined to receive at first the Word of Truth through Lay Agency. On both the southern and western shores of that vast continent Local Preachers were the pioneers of Christianity and Methodism. Of the scenes of their labours, and the initiatory steps which they took in the work, little only can be said at present. One or two important places in which they laboured, however, deserve notice at our hands. Sierra Leone, on the western coast, is alike interesting in its history as a colony, and as a field of Christian enterprise, exhibiting as it does, the solicitous regard which Protestant England cherished for the welfare



of the noble sons and daughters of Africa. Many of the negro slaves of America had entered the British Army during the Revolution, and bravely fought, with the prospect of freedom as the reward of their services ; but when disbanded at the declaration of peace, many were without employment, and reduced to a state of starvation. To ameliorate their condition, as well as to save them from the retaliative measures of their cruel taskmasters, against whom they had taken arms, some benevolent men of this country suggested to the English Government the propriety of those negroes being settled in the district of Sierra Leone. The Government received the proposition with favour, successfully negotiated with the native chiefs for the purchase of land to the extent of twenty square miles, and without delay conveyed four hundred of these negroes to the acquired territory. But strangely enough, sixty women of loose character were sent out with these poor creatures to the new settlement, their expenses being also defrayed by the country. We need not endeavour to describe the consequences of an emigration of such a character. In a short time many of the black settlers had died from the effects of profligacy, while the remainder had forsaken the land which required cultivation. About this period the slave-trade formed a prominent subject of discussion in Great Britain, and many of those who opposed the traffic in human beings embraced every opportunity of assisting the negro race towards universal emancipation. When, therefore, the deserted state of Sierra Leone was fully known, these philanthropists resolved upon repeopling it, and sought, by creating a centre of civilisation in that district, to check in some measure a traffic alike degrading to the slave-dealer and the slave.

To secure the accomplishment of this laudable design, a public company was formed under the sanction of the British Parliament ; and after the necessary powers had been



obtained, arrangements for carrying out the scheme were made. Artisans of divers trades, selected for their morality and industry, with a small company of soldiers, constituted the basis of the new colony. Arriving in safety, they at once proceeded to the work of forming themselves into a community. Laws were enacted, a form of religion was agreed upon, a town was laid out, and other features of modern civilisation were adopted by the colonists. For the important work which had been thus undertaken more labourers were soon required, and this want was made known in England. Happily the promoters of the company directed their attention to the black soldiers who had settled in Canada, the climate of which country was too cold for the African, and offered to transmit to Sierra Leone as many as wished to improve their condition in life. Accordingly, in the year 1792, eleven hundred and thirty-one negroes left the snow-wreathed forests of Canada, for the more congenial climate of Western Africa. But this movement, highly praiseworthy in every sense, wears a somewhat interesting aspect when viewed in its relation to Methodism, and it was destined to initiate an era in the history of African Missions. Amongst the number of negroes thus transferred to Sierra Leone were many Wesleyan Methodists, two or three of whom were Local Preachers and Leaders. Settled in their new home, they began the religious services, and submitted to the connexional laws to which they had been accustomed in Canada. This little Church, though not under the direct governance of the Conference, was recognised as a Wesleyan community. Without a Preacher to guide them in the truth, they continued as a Christian people until the year 1810, when a Missionary was sent to them from England, accompanied by three pious young men as schoolmasters. When Mr Warren, the Missionary, and his companions reached the place of their destination,



they were received by the African Church with inexpressible joy. Mr Gordon, the chief Local Preacher, on being introduced to the Englishmen, "exclaimed with rapture, 'This is what we have been praying for so long!'" Gordon then called upon Brown, another Local Preacher, and after consulting with him and other Leaders of the Society, as to the genuineness of Mr Warren's credentials, and being satisfied with the same, they introduced the Missionary to the whole of the members who had assembled for that purpose. Mr Warren and his friends were highly gratified with the position of affairs, one hundred and ten members being then in Society; and entering with spirit into their work, many more were speedily added to the Church. The Missionary had not laboured long amongst them, however, when he "fell a sacrifice to his zeal." But the work thus begun has continued to prosper, and there are at present in Western Africa, nine thousand one hundred and seventy-eight persons who are members of the Wesleyan Society.

#### CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

In an equally interesting, yet apparently insignificant manner, was Methodism introduced to the southern part of Africa. At the time to which we are about to refer, the Cape of Good Hope was an important military station. In the ranks of the regiments there quartered there were many pious Methodists, some of whom had been converted in Ireland. In the year 1806, according to an account given by George Middlemass, of the LXXIId Regiment, some of those Christian soldiers "began to make inquiries in the several regiments if there were any Methodists among them, or any that were striving to work out their salvation. About thirty-four of this description were found in the XCIIId Regiment, about five sincere Methodists were found in the XXIst Light Dragoons, one in the XXIVth Foot, and two in



the LXXIId Regiment." These all agreed to meet together in Christian fellowship, and for that purpose they at first erected a roughly-built hut in the suburbs of Cape Town, and afterwards obtained the use of a large meeting-house which belonged to the Society of Friends. With the exception of some bitterness of feeling which had been engendered by doctrinal disputations, the Methodist soldiers worked harmoniously together, and they continued to hold their meetings with great success, many believers being added to their number. "We have had two Love-feasts," says the same person; "we keep up Class and Band meetings, and Watch-nights, at the time proposed by the Society."

Thus were these humble Christian Soldiers as lights in a dark place. Who can estimate their influence for good upon the minds of the heathen by whom they were surrounded? From Cape Town, William Blowes, a gunner, thus writes to Dr Coke:—"1st January 1814. The Society here is in a prosperous state. It consists of one hundred and twenty-nine steady members, who are closely joined to each other by the strong bond of Christian love. We have also a number upon trial. The blessing of God attends the preaching of the Word among us, and we experience the power of His presence at our prayer-meetings. The place where we meet is a large room, for the use of which we pay two pounds currency per month. In the different regiments here there are fourteen men of colour convinced of sin, and there are four who have obtained a sense of their acceptance in the Beloved. What makes the work begun and carried on in those men appear the more extraordinary, is that they do not understand our language. One of them, who has obtained tolerably clear views of the plan of salvation, can read the New Testament in English, and he explains it in the best manner he is able to the others, and



to good effect. "O dear sir, no one can conceive the good which might be done here had we but a Preacher from England! Our prayers are continually offered up at a throne of grace in your behalf, and we hope that you do not forget us. We have need of your prayers, as well as of a Preacher from you, to guide us in the true gospel of Jesus Christ." Some may value but lightly, in these days, the influence of godly persons of a past generation, who were guided for long seasons solely by Local Preachers; yet the relationship between Lay Agency and the South African Mission was not unimportant in its results. In 1814 a missionary was sent out to Cape Town, to take charge of the Methodist Society; and now there are in the southern part of the African continent, fourteen thousand four hundred persons in Church membership.

#### CHINA.

The Chinese Empire was for ages an object of profound curiosity to the inhabitants of Europe. The physical aspect of the country, the social habits of the people, together with their language, literature, manufactures, agricultural produce, government, and religion, all were unknown, comparatively speaking, to the Western World, until an almost recent period. Until the beginning of the present century, a spirit of the utmost exclusiveness clung to the Chinese, and caused them to hold aloof from the other nations of the earth; and even after commerce had partially opened their ports to the Western trader, many restrictions hindered the growth of friendship between them and their fellow-men. But as soon as the barriers of prejudice and contempt had been in a measure laid aside, mainly through the prompt and decisive action of the English Government, the Protestants of our own land put forth their earliest effort for the evangelisation of China. Dr Morrison laboured as the first Christian Evan-



gelist among the people, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, and while so engaged prepared a grammar of the language, besides translating the Holy Scriptures ; and thus was the way prepared for others who should succeed him in the arduous work. In the year 1845 the country was thrown open to foreigners, in a manner hitherto unknown to those whose duties led them thither. About that time a public notification was made, to the effect that Christianity in any form might be freely professed, while gospel Missionaries were declared to be, by the laws of the country, permitted to travel into the interior, their presence having been formerly confined within the limits of the quintette of "Free Ports." Up to this period the Wesleyan Missionary Society had been unable, in consequence of its resources being fully employed in other parts of the world, to send out labourers to this densely populated and thoroughly idolatrous empire. But the Connexion was soon to be fittingly represented among the pioneers of Christianity in the "Flowery Land," and enabled to take its share in the great work of endeavouring to evangelise a race of pagans, the individuals of which form, according to the best authorities, a third part of the whole human race !

George Piercy, a pious young Yorkshireman, feeling the burden of China's alienation from God laid upon him, felt constrained to consecrate his life to the work of her spiritual enlightenment and subjection to Christ. We have already had occasion to notice the prominent part taken by British soldiers in the establishment and prosecution of Methodist Missions, and the history of that enterprise of our Church, among the idol-worshippers of Eastern Asia, again furnishes us with a gratifying instance of the religious integrity and zeal of a small company of England's military sons. Far from their own country, and the holy influences of faithful teaching in the truths of the gospel of Christ, they made their spiritual



wants known at home, and, in consequence of their representations, George Piercy resolved to proceed to China as a humble Preacher of Methodist doctrines to his fellow-countrymen, and the people among whom they sojourned. Without any pledge of support from the Wesleyan Society, or its Missionary Institution, but solely at his own charge, and in full reliance upon the protection of Jehovah, did this faithful Lay Servant of the gospel embark for Hong Kong, where he arrived on the 20th January 1851. On his way to the military barracks he met a corporal, with whom he entered into conversation, and found to be one of the members of the small Wesleyan Class the exigencies of which had determined him to come to Hong Kong. In course of conversation, Piercy learned that his red-coated Christian brother was the sole survivor of the Methodist community in the garrison, the others having been removed by death a short time before his arrival. With commendable earnestness the young volunteer-missionary made arrangements for labouring among his own countrymen, until he was able, through the acquirement of their language, to preach a crucified Redeemer to the natives. After a short stay with Dr Legge, of the London Missionary Society, who gave his inexperienced Wesleyan fellow-labourer a hearty welcome and valuable counsel, Piercy hired a suite of rooms in the city, one of which he fitted up as a Preaching-house for British soldiers; while by systematic visitation at the barracks and hospital he also endeavoured to lead sinners to the feet of the Saviour. His labours brought forth good fruit; for, under the blessing of God, a Methodist Society of about twenty persons was speedily formed, while the sincerity and affection of the converts for their Lay Pastor was exhibited in their contributing to the support of the gospel which had made them free.

Encouraged by the success of his efforts in the cause



of Christ, and desirous of being formally recognised as a Missionary in the Church of which he had been for a considerable time an attached and consistent member, Piercy offered his services to the Wesleyan Missionary Society. After examination, by correspondence, as to his experience in the Divine life and doctrinal convictions, he was accepted as the Ministerial Agent of the Society to the Chinese ; and for the more vigorous prosecution of the arduous work in which he was engaged, he removed to the more important sphere for missionary effort which was presented to his view in the extent and condition of the Canton District. Having again hired rooms, which he converted into a suitable Preaching-station, he engaged the services of a native assistant, in order to prosecute more effectually his study of the native language. By indefatigable industry he was soon able to preach in an intelligible manner to the Chinese population, while he was greatly encouraged in his labours by the Christian sympathy and advice of his friends Dr and Mrs Hobson, of the London Missionary Society. The following extract from one of his letters to the Committee in London, shortly after his arrival in the city of Canton, sufficiently explains his new position and prospects. He writes :—"As to the field before me, I need not say it is large. I am a temporary resident in a house not far from the factories close to the river, and to a ferry over which nine thousand persons frequently pass in a day. It is a little way into the western suburbs, over which, from a lofty verandah, I have an extensive view. I can look two miles to the west, and two and a half to the north ; and in this small space are crowded the abodes and persons of four hundred thousand human beings. Through every street of this given space I can pass unmolested ; and in many places I can enter shops and leave a tract, or speak a few minutes with the people. I think I perceive a difference in the treatment of



foreigners of late. The free intercourse of the missionary-families with the people has had a very beneficial effect. As to the people themselves, there is a moral and mental apathy respecting the truth, which is a great discouragement to the Missionary. Yet still numbers are willing, and some desirous, to receive Christian books and tracts. They come into the Preaching-room, and in many instances pay close attention to the speaker. The idolatry and temple rites have no hold on their hearts but as seasons of show and mirth, of amusement and relaxation from business. In this field are found rich and poor, learned and unlearned, in vast numbers. If a Chinese is of equal value with any other human being, what a number of islands and large tracts of territory elsewhere, will even this city outweigh !”

Through the liberality of friends in England, the Wesleyan Mission to China was placed upon a firmer foundation as to its resources, and on the 20th January 1853, the Revs. W. R. Beach and Josiah Cox arrived in Canton, as the colleagues and assistants of the brother who had paved the way to a considerable extent for their appearance in that portion of the Lord's vineyard. For some time after their arrival they had to be constantly engaged in the study of the language, and in other methods of preparation for the work which lay before them. Mr Piercy had by this time mastered the greater difficulties of preparatory training, and was daily engaged either in preaching, teaching, visiting, or in other labours. Besides the duties we have enumerated, he had been much employed in translating—a species of missionary-work for which the first Wesleyan Missionary to China exhibited considerable aptitude. With the most pleasing results, the Conference Catechisms, translated into the Chinese language by Mr Piercy, were introduced to a school for boys which had been established under favourable auspices ; and thus a beginning was made in the good



object of training the young in the first principles of gospel truth. The active work of the Mission was vigorously prosecuted until hostilities broke out between the empire and Great Britain, and the Missionaries were, in consequence of the serious interruption which ensued, obliged to leave the city of Canton, in the month of November 1856, and seek refuge in Macao, where they stayed for nearly two years.

Although obliged to leave a scene where they had been singularly useful in the midst of almost overwhelming difficulties, Mr Piercy and his companions were not idle. Shortly before their exile they had been joined by other three brethren from England, and under the direction of him who had been the pioneer of the Mission, four meetings were held weekly in Macao, for the spiritual benefit of the Chinese residents, and with gratifying results. Towards the close of the year 1858 peace was restored, and Canton was again occupied as a station of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. In the following year, four day-schools were established in the city, and several of the elder scholars soon displayed considerable progress in religious knowledge. Nor were the soldiers of our country neglected; for Mr Piercy laboured earnestly on their behalf, and was cheered and encouraged by the fact that many of his fellow-countrymen embraced Christ as He is freely offered in the gospel. The number of native converts also steadily increased, and the case of one is mentioned as exhibiting the fruits of the pardoning love of God in the hour of sickness, and at the moment of death. Of the other oriental Methodists, the following testimony is contained in the District Minutes for that time:—"We have great joy in recording that the general conduct of our Chinese members has been in accordance with the gospel, and we believe they are steadily advancing in the knowledge and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, whilst three of them have cheered us by their



marked zeal for the salvation of their countrymen." Arrangements were made, in the year 1860, for the erection of commodious chapels, schools, and other premises, in different parts of Canton; and on these being opened, a new impulse was given to the cause of Christ there, and fresh occasions for gratitude to Him who had crowned the laudable enterprise of one of His earnest, believing children with abundant blessings. Writing to the Committee of the Missionary Society, Mr Piercy was enabled, through the goodness of God, to take the following view of the Mission which had been begun by his own unaided efforts. "I trust," he writes, "the Conference of 1862 will be able, ten years after the establishment of our first Mission at Canton, to undertake the commencement of a second, with at least three or four men, in the very heart of this great empire. What obstacles has Divine Providence removed during these ten years! Now all the country is open before us. Men are wanted who will give themselves to the work of evangelising this country in its length and breadth, who are willing to leave the old posts, and penetrate into new localities, and, with self-denying love to perishing souls, encounter the difficulties of opening up new fields of labour." The Wesleyan Society is now represented, among the native population of China, by a membership of two hundred and thirty-three persons.

#### AUSTRALIA.

According to the generally-received opinion, Australia was discovered by the Portuguese in the earlier part of the sixteenth century. It is nearly equal in area to the whole of the Continent of Europe, and has with justice been described as the largest island on the globe. After its first discovery by the people named, its western shores were explored by Dirk Harto, a Dutch navigator, in the year 1816;



and, a few years later, a party of mariners from Holland also landed on the coast about Swan River, and penetrated for some distance into the interior. In the year 1627 the southern extremity of what has been aptly termed "the fifth quarter of the world" was visited by the Dutch, and at a later period, when its northern shores had been discovered, the name of "New Holland" was given to a continent which has been estimated to extend to 2400 miles in length, and 1200 in breadth. It received the designation of "New South Wales" from the celebrated English navigator Captain Cook, who landed on the eastern coast of the great island in 1770; but both its early Dutch and English names have been subsequently merged in the title "Australia," which comprehends also the smaller island of Tasmania. Towards the close of the eighteenth century the first British settlement in that part of the globe was founded. Upon the declaration of American Independence, it was deemed necessary to establish a colony for the reception of persons convicted of the more serious offences against the law in the United Kingdom, in lieu of the North American provinces to which British convicts had formerly been transported. For that purpose the Government of this country equipped a small fleet, provisioned for two years, which set sail for New South Wales, with nearly three hundred free emigrants, and seven hundred and fifty convicts, on board.

Under the command of Captain Phillip, who had been appointed to the Governorship of the settlement, the fleet arrived at Port Jackson on the 20th June 1788, where the emigrants and prisoners were landed and employed in felling trees, and otherwise clearing the ground on which the city of Sydney was afterwards to be erected. From time to time other batches of criminals were despatched to the colony, while those who had completed their terms of sentence, or had received commutation of the same, took



up a permanent abode in the country, either working as mechanics or labourers, engaging in agricultural pursuits, or embarking in commercial enterprise. Such, for the most part, were the materials out of which an important province of the British Empire was established. Hostilities of a desultory but deadly character were carried on for some time between the savage aborigines and the English ; but the spears and arrows of the former were unequally matched against the musket-bullets of the latter, who eventually were allowed to retain undisputed occupation of the colony. A gradual decrease in the number of the aborigines soon became apparent : a result brought about, not only by the exterminating cruelty of the colonists, but also by the excessive use of ardent spirits, which had been introduced among the natives by European traders. With such a history to mark the early relations between the British and the dusky natives of Australia, it is not surprising that efforts to civilise and Christianise these poor degraded sons of humanity have hitherto ended in the most bitter disappointment. For the most part the community was composed of convicts, many of whom had been uneducated before the period of their incarceration, and were without any religious principle to guide them in the path of honesty, sobriety, and honour. The free colonists were generally "squatters," who were scattered over a wide extent of country, and who, for want of the means of grace, and by reason of their isolated position, were but little superior, morally and socially, to those who had been transported thither for their crimes. Very little, indeed, was done by the Government for the social regeneration of the people, and up to the year 1813 only four chaplains had been sent from England to take the spiritual oversight of twenty thousand souls, the greater number of whom were natives of the United Kingdom,



while only a few schoolmasters had been despatched to the colony to meet its great educational requirements.

To Thomas Bowden and John Hosking, two of the early teachers, is due the honour of being recognised as the humble instruments, under God, of planting the seeds of Wesleyanism upon Australian soil. They had been Wesleyan schoolmasters in London, and deeply felt the want of that spiritual guidance to which they had been accustomed in the land of their birth. Taking counsel together, they organised a Class, consisting of themselves, their wives, two school-girls, two soldiers from the garrison at Sydney, and four others, who were civilians. These twelve persons constituted the first Methodist Society in that part of the Southern Hemisphere, under the joint-leadership of the pious schoolmasters. Sincerely desirous of "working out their own salvation," though with "fear and trembling," the members of the little Methodist church did not confine their efforts to the mutual edification and growth in grace of their own number, but zealously strove also to extend the blessings of the gospel to those among whom their lot was cast. For this purpose Bowden and Hosking laboured incessantly, and their prayers, self-denial, and holy zeal were signally honoured by the Master whom they served. But while they from week to week experienced the power of that strength which cometh from above, so did they also realise their own weakness when opposed to the evil influences which surrounded them; and after due deliberation they determined upon seeking assistance from their spiritual mother in England. Accordingly, they sent to the committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society a statement detailing the circumstances of the Society, and pleaded earnestly that a Missionary might be appointed to confirm and strengthen the work which had already been done.



The first Class-Meeting was held on the 6th March 1812, and the touching communication—signed by Thomas Bowden and J. Hosking, as Leaders of the Society—was received in London in March 1814. The following extract presents an appalling picture of the Australian people of that day, but withal exhibits such a spirit of deep-toned piety and earnest Christian devotion on the part of the writers, that we make no apology for its insertion here:—

“In the land which gave us birth,” the Lay Stewards of the truth remark, “we enjoyed the privileges of the glorious gospel, and in our union with the Methodists we had access to those blessed means of grace which are the glory of that people. Here, we may truly say, ‘The people sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death.’ Around us, on every hand, we see ignorance and profanity greatly abounding. Sin and its consequent misery, like an overwhelming deluge, overflows the land. We cannot but feel for our fellow-creatures, degenerated and depraved. We feel for ourselves as situated amongst them. We feel for our children, the offspring of our bowels, whom we may leave behind us, when God shall be pleased to call us hence. To our God we make our complaint, and look for help, and under Him, fathers, to you, as the instruments of bringing us from darkness to His marvellous light. To you our eyes are naturally turned, and that you may the better judge how to assist us, we beg leave to lay before you the state of this country and of our circumstances. There are probably 20,000 souls in this colony, natives of the British Isles and their descendants. From the description of people sent thither much good cannot be expected. The higher ranks of those who were formerly convicts are in general either solely occupied in amassing wealth or rioting in sensuality. The lower orders are indeed the filth and offscouring of the earth in point of



wickedness. Long accustomed to idleness and iniquity of every kind, here they indulge their vicious inclinations without a blush. Drunkenness, adultery, Sabbath-breaking, and blasphemy, are no longer considered even as indecencies. All those ties of moral order and feelings of decency which bind society together are not only relaxed, but almost *extinct*. This is the general character of the convicts, high and low; and excepting the civil and military departments of the Government, there is no other difference than that which wealth naturally creates, in the means it affords for greater indulgence in vice. . . . Send a faithful servant of the Lord to us; surely there are many willing, yea, desirous to succour the disciples of our common Lord, to proclaim His salvation to perishing sinners even in this distant land. Find one such, and send him among us. Deny us not; our hearts, our expectations are turned to you. Our hope is from you; disappoint us not. We call upon you in our *own* behalf; leave us not forsaken in this benighted land. We call upon you on behalf of our *children*; let not them be left to perish for lack of instruction. We call upon you in behalf of those who have neither opportunity nor inclination to speak for themselves, *perishing, dying sinners*; leave them not in their blood. We call upon you in the name of the *outcasts of society*, sent and daily sending hither; administer to them that Word of Life which may make their exile a blessing. Send us that *gospel* which you have received from the Lord to *preach* to *every creature*. Send among us *one of yourselves*, and we, and a seed to the Lord, shall rise to bless you."

The appeal of Bowden and Hosking for spiritual help and countenance towards the Wesleyan Society which they had been the means of founding at Sydney, evoked a fitting response from the noble Institution to which it had been addressed. The Committee of the Missionary Society



received it as a special call from the Lord for a labourer to be sent to that distant portion of His vineyard, and one, eminently adapted for the work to which he was appointed, embarked on the 28th February 1815, for Sydney, where he arrived on the 10th August, after a stormy passage of upwards of five months. In the meantime, however, the infant Church and its Leaders had not been idle, but endeavoured as far as possible to make suitable provision for the support of that gospel which they prized so highly. For that purpose they collected and invested a sum of money in a herd of cattle, as from the peculiar nature of the country, and the advantage arising from the natural increase of the animals, this was considered to be the most profitable way of speculating with their funds ; while it was computed that from this source alone the Society would be able to maintain a minister, without depending either upon an increase of members or assistance from the Connexion at home. The fund thus invested was conveyed by deed to Trustees, who were to devote it to the cause of the gospel exclusively, and the result proved that the scheme had been devised with wisdom. But Methodist doctrine and practice was not confined to the town where the pious schoolmasters devoted themselves to the training of the young and the exhortation of their fellow-Christians. The gospel of the grace of God had penetrated into the country, and at Windsor, a populous village on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, about thirty-six miles from Sydney, a Wesleyan Class had also been formed. After the arrival of the Rev. Samuel Leigh, the first ordained Missionary in Australia, a great impulse was given to the cause of Christ, and the Lay Agency, which had been the instrument of establishing Wesleyanism in the colony, was developed, and became of signal service to the faithful Minister who had left his home and friends for the sake of perishing souls.



Two or three good men, who had been brought to the Saviour through the word and example of Bowden and Hosking, were admitted into the Lay-Ministry, and laboured zealously in the Lord's work. Another devoted Local Preacher also rendered important aid, and his name is worthy of being specially noticed in connection with the early history of Australian Methodism. Sergeant James Scott had been converted to God, and joined the Wesleyan Communion in the West Indies. He belonged to the XLVIth Regiment, and during his period of service as a non-commissioned officer, gave great satisfaction to his superiors by the faithfulness with which he discharged his duties. On the regiment changing its quarters to New South Wales, the worthy sergeant retired from the army, and settled in Sydney, where he prominently identified himself with the Methodist cause. He was not only an able and zealous Lay-Preacher, but in other ways an earnest and valuable assistant to the first Wesleyan Missionary appointed to the superintendence of that great field of gospel enterprise. Besides preaching in the most notorious district of the town, where the Meeting-house was situated, he opened his own dwelling for the honour of God and the good of souls, and purchased property in Prince Street, a part of which was altered and adapted to the purposes of a residence for the minister, and another portion used as a site for a new chapel, which was afterwards built at the sole charge of this noble-minded servant of Christ. At Windsor, also, a chapel was erected. The Society there was indebted for the ground on which their sanctuary stood to the brotherly kindness of the Rev. Samuel Marsden, a Church of England chaplain, who had been a Wesleyan in his youth; and the charitable clergyman evinced in many other respects his love for the Connexion to which he had been formerly attached. Thus did the work of the Lord prosper in the



hands of those to whom it had been committed by the Great Master of Assemblies. There are at the present time upwards of sixty thousand members of the Wesleyan Society in Australia.

In the preceding pages we have endeavoured to place before the reader a few cases illustrative of the connection which has subsisted between Lay Agency and the Missionary Schemes of our Church. When an ordained Wesleyan Minister could not be found to undertake the duty of planting the standard of Methodism in the Isle of Man, we have seen John Crook, a Layman, deputed to the work by the Liverpool Society. We have found the Shetland Islands almost destitute of the Word of Life, until John Nicholson, a Lay Brother, went thither with his message of love and mercy to the people. In like manner the inhabitants of the Channel Islands were so degenerate as to consider religion a delusion, and its professors madmen, but the gospel was proclaimed by Le Sueur, an unordained Preacher of righteousness, and the moral aspect of Society thereon became gradually changed. We have recorded the fact that superstition reigned supreme in the West Indies up to the period of the advent of Gilbert and Baxter, who were earnest and devoted Lay Brethren. Canada and Nova Scotia, before the period when Tuffey, Neal, Black, and other Evangelists laboured in their midst, were, comparatively speaking, strangers to the truth as it is in Jesus. Africa, China, and Australia were also enveloped in gross darkness until Lay Methodists carried the lamp of the gospel to their shores. These, and other missionary-fields to which we have briefly referred, were without the knowledge of Christ and His salvation, before Wesleyan Local Preachers had penetrated to ground hitherto untrodden by the messengers of the Lord. And as the humble men we have named, with Brackenbury,



Middlemass, Blowes, Piercy, and others preached redemption by a crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour, the gloom of paganism was dispelled, the idols of the heathen were cast down, liberty was extended towards the slave, while their footsteps in the world were marked by the blessings of that religion which Christ left the throne of His glory to establish upon earth.

Other spheres of Methodist missionary enterprise—such as Maryland and the Prairie Villages of the West—might be cited in evidence of the utility of Lay Agency, but the limits of our present space call upon us to forbear. Our short sketches of the origin of several important Missions have been given simply to show the incalculable benefits which have accrued from the self-denying labours of unordained Preachers of the gospel. The stories of the careers of eminent ordained Missionaries have been frequently told. William Warrener in the West Indies, Barnabas Shaw in Southern Africa, John Morgan in Western Africa, William Losee in Canada, with other holy and indefatigable Ministers, gave vitality and strength to the Societies in which they respectively laboured, and will ever be regarded as the nursing-fathers of Missions abroad. But, regarded as a whole, the history of Wesleyanism throughout the world embraces the zealous activity of the Lay Ministry as well as the superintending care of the Ordained Pastorate ; and while we gaze with wonderment upon the noble picture of God's husbandmen sowing the seeds of eternal life, in spite of stupendous obstacles and when surrounded by overwhelming dangers, let us cherish the memory of the good and brave Lay Pioneers of Christianity who prepared the way for a higher order of the Soldiers of Christ, and who undoubtedly earned for themselves a title to be actively employed in the glorious work of diffusing the gospel among men.



## MISCELLANEA.

“THERE is no action of life,” says Thomas of Malmesbury, “which is not the beginning of so long a chain of consequences as that no human providence is high enough to give us a prospect to the end.” The truth of this aptly-expressed sentiment we fully endorse, for in our course through life we often meet with striking illustrations of the truth of the statement. One such example is so pertinent and so remarkable as to its chain of events, that we cannot forbear recording it for the benefit of the reader :—“ ‘Bunny’s Resolution’ roused Richard Baxter to concern, and Sibbs’ ‘Bruised Reed’ led him to the Saviour. Baxter then wrote the ‘Call to the Unconverted,’ which book, given him by a beggar at his door, was blessed to Philip Doddridge, who afterwards wrote ‘The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.’ This book gave the first religious impressions to William Wilberforce, then M.P. for the County of York. Wilberforce soon wrote his ‘Practical View of Christianity,’ which book was instrumental in the conversion of Legh Richmond, who in his turn wrote the ‘Dairyman’s Daughter’ and the ‘Young Cottager,’ which have been the means of blessing many souls. ‘The Practical View’ was also instrumental in leading Dr Chalmers to the knowledge of the truth; and who can estimate the worth and the influence of the books which he afterwards wrote?” This concatenation of circumstances, unfolding in a striking manner the providence of God, has many counterparts in the history of Methodism.



One instance of the kind only we cite at present. At the same time, many of the facts recorded in the present chapter will show the intimate relation of one person to another in their influence for good upon the world. By the instrumentality of Joseph Watson, the eminent commentator, Joseph Benson, was led to Christ—Joseph Benson, in his turn, had greater influence over William Dawson than any other contemporary preacher—William Dawson again was the spiritual father of John Haigh, missionary to Newfoundland. Haigh was made the means of bringing hundreds more to a knowledge of the truth, these in their respective circles of society would undoubtedly incite others to seek the Saviour, and thus by a succession of providences we see one generation affecting another for the highest ends.

The zeal of Thomas Maxfield, Wesley's first Lay Helper, was destined to incite those who heard him to acts of faith; and as a secondary cause to create new circles of religious life amongst men. Thus was his interview with Dr Coke prolific of the greatest good, not only to the Doctor himself, but also to mankind at large. When Dr Coke entered the Methodist Society he was a stranger to regenerating grace, and as he witnessed the happiness of God's believing people who were united with Wesley, his state of mind became extremely oppressive. Unacquainted with the Doctor's experience in divine things, Maxfield began to converse with him on the subject of sanctification, clearly showing its nature and necessity, with the medium through which it was to be obtained. Such views of Divine truth were altogether new to Dr Coke, and as he looked at the Lay-Preacher and listened to his wonderful deliverances, he was astonished to a degree. But they were as "fitly chosen" words to the earnest seeker after peace, for he left his friend to muse, to pray, to believe. He had not long sought the Saviour of men, as He is presented to us in the Gospel, when every



barrier between himself and the Redeemer was cast down, and to his enraptured view Christ appeared as the Fountain of Saving Grace. To every new-born soul the sense of pardon is inexpressibly dear, begetting within them desires after the higher Christian life, and this was pre-eminently the case with Dr Coke. Naturally of a buoyant disposition, he now entered with holy enthusiasm into all the services of the Society. His evangelical labours and godly influence amongst the people were, from this period, productive of the most blessed effect ; and many of those to whom he ministered were led to "glorify God on his behalf." Who can estimate the ulterior results of Maxfield's conversation with one, whose subsequent life was so conspicuously devoted to the service of God, in promulgating the truths of the Gospel of Christ to the most distant parts of the earth ? As the Agent of the Wesleyan Conference, Dr Coke was largely instrumental in bringing thousands of the heathen to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and his almost unparalleled labours in the field of Missions have invested his name and career with a great and lasting interest, not only to the Connexion with which he was so nobly identified, but also to other sections of Protestant Christianity.

The intimate connection of Local Preachers to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, may also be fittingly described here. After the death of Dr Coke, in whom the Society may be said to have been embodied for many years, suitable arrangements were required, for the purpose of continuing the operation of the Institution. In the suggestion of a systematic plan of action, W. G. Scarth, Esq., a Local Preacher, of Leeds, and Mr William Dawson, of Barnbow, played no unimportant part. In the "Life of the Village Blacksmith" we read, "The biographer has had too deep an interest in these meetings not to recollect the influence of their beginnings upon his own mind. It is difficult precisely to determine, at this



distance of time, with whom the first thought originated, or what was the first sentence that led to them. Mr Scarth, of Leeds, repeatedly remarked to Mr Dawson *before* Dr Coke took his departure for India, "The Missionary cause must be taken out of the Doctor's hand ; it must be made *a public, a common cause.*" It is not impossible that this may have been the *germ* of the whole. Mr Bunting organised the first plan, Mr Watson wrote the first address, Mr Buckley preached the first sermon at Armley, a place belonging to the Bramley Circuit ; and the first public meeting was held in the old chapel at Leeds, J. Thompson, Esq., M.P., being in the chair. Mr George Morley, superintendent minister at Leeds, also took a prominent part in the consolidation of the Missionary Society : but, as we have already seen, the Lay Brethren we have named were the first to strike a chord which vibrated with signal effect throughout the Connexion, and raised an anthem of praise to the Lord of Missions, the full effect of which will only be realised in eternity.

The Prayer Meeting, another institution destined to be of great service to the Connexion, was established at Dukinfield and Ashton, by two Lay Agents. Mr Wesley describes its origin in the following terms :—"Mr Matthew Mayer, of Portland Hall, near Stockport, and John Morris, of Manchester, both young men, established weekly prayer-meetings at Davy-Hulme, Dukinfield, Ashton, and other places." As numbers of persons attended these meetings, who were utterly ignorant of the things of God, these young men exhorted them to "flee from the wrath to come." The effects were surprising ; upwards of sixty persons were awakened, and added to the Society at Davy-Hulme, in a few weeks after the establishment of Prayer Meetings in the village. These services having been attended with gracious results, the adoption of them soon became general,



and everywhere throughout the country they were made a blessing to the people. In our day there are few, if any, Societies within the pale of the Methodist community that have not a Weekly Prayer-Meeting.

Equally serviceable to Mr Wesley were the Agents or Lay Helpers, in suggesting that the "Class" might not only be utilised as a means of Christian fellowship, but also as a powerful aid, temporarily and spiritually, to the regular pastorate of the Church. The Founder of Methodism writes, "While we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the Society in Bristol (15th February 1742) concerning the means of paying the debts there, when one stood up and said, 'Let every member of the Society give a penny a week till all are paid.' Another answered, 'But many of them are poor and cannot afford to do it.' 'Then,' said he, 'put eleven of the poorest men with me, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself, and each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.' It was done. In a while some of these informed me, they found such and such an one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately,—this is the thing, the very thing we have wanted so long. I called together all the leaders of the classes (so we used to term them and their companies), and desired that each would make a particular inquiry into the behaviour of those whom he saw weekly, and, in order to a still more particular supervision of the members, I determined to talk with every member myself, and to inquire at their own mouths, as well as of their leaders and neighbours, whether they grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."\*

\* "Wesley's Works," vol. viii.



There are few departments of Methodistic work in which we cannot trace the active efforts and extraordinary usefulness of Local Preachers. So devoted have they been to the cause of Christ, that we have found them associated with, or helpful to, many of the leading ministers of the Connexion; while they have given force and stability to some of the boldest and most successful schemes. No eulogium of ours can fittingly express the high qualities and value of such men as Dr Coke, Joseph Benson, and Dr Clarke; the works of whom are monuments to their memory. Yet we think that their names ought not to be entirely dissociated from those of their humbler brethren, by whom, as the instruments of the Holy Spirit, they were first brought to a knowledge of the truth. The well-known Commentaries of the divines just mentioned, were not the least among the ulterior fruits of the Lay Agency of our Connexion. Already in the present chapter we have recorded the spiritual help which Maxfield rendered to Dr Coke. It will also be remembered by our reader, that Coke's Commentary was placed in the hands of Samuel Drew, to suggest such alteration, improvement, and enlargement as might appear to the Metaphysician necessary. Between Local Preachers and another eminent divine there subsisted a close relationship. The celebrated Commentator, Joseph Benson, writes in his diary, "When I was about sixteen years of age, it pleased God, by means of conversation with a cousin of mine, to convince me that I was not in His favour, since I did not know my sins were pardoned. I was more and more deeply made sensible of my alienation to God, by continuing to hear the Methodists with whom I was united, and was in great disquietude and distress, almost continually for about ten months, till the Lord gave me to believe in His Son, and shed abroad His love in my heart." Joseph Watson, the cousin of Mr Benson, con-



tinued to be helpful, and chiefly by the counsel and encouragement of his lay relative was the latter directed to the work of preaching. While pioneering in the district of Coleraine, in which Adam Clarke spent his earlier years, Mr Thomas Barber, "acting as a Missionary at his own cost, and emphatically performing the work of an Evangelist through an extensive tract of country near the sea-coasts of the county of Antrim," was made the means of bringing him, who became an eminent divine, to a saving belief in the Lord Jesus: Clarke's Commentary was thus an after-fruit from the spiritual seed which had been sown by a Wesleyan Local Preacher.

But in a positive as well as in an indirect manner, Local Preachers have contributed to the wealth of Methodist literature. They have not only furnished numberless memoirs of devout persons to the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, and supplied many valuable papers on various subjects to the editors of that periodical, besides handling, with discrimination, judgment, and care, the vexed questions of their day; but they have given to the Connexion some of its standard works of reference. The "History of Methodism," by George Smith, is distinguished for extensive research, careful arrangement, profound thought, impartial judgment, and faithful narrative; and, though it was the first of the kind published, the record is both complete and beautiful, admitting of little, if any, alteration by subsequent writers. In three vols. 8vo, pp. 2171, this able Historian presents us with a portraiture of Methodism that is alike finished and fascinating, and while it reflects a mind of a very superior order, it ought to exalt, in the estimation of the reader, that class of Christian labourers to which the author was so warmly attached, and with which he was so nobly identified. But in addition to this masterly production, there are others of a high character from the



same talented pen. We need only mention the titles of these works, and the reader will be able to form some idea of their character. They are as follows :—"The Harmony of the Divine Dispensations," "The Doctrine of the Cherubim," "The Wesleyan Local Preacher's Manual," "Sacred Annals," in three vols., "Religion of Ancient Britain," and "The Doctrine of the Christian Pastorate." As a fitting companion to the standard "History of Methodism," we are furnished by another Local Preacher with a compendium of Wesleyan Records. This work, "characterised by conciseness of statement and variety of incident," is in every respect interesting and valuable. The author, George H. Harwood, has, in 241 pages 12mo, placed in our hands a most useful synopsis of Methodist History. These examples of literary talent are given to represent simply the class of individuals to which they belong, and which is not in any wise inferior. Many more than those cited might be readily named, but our present design is to present a few types only of gifted men ; the order comprises scores of literateurs. While alive to the fact that very many of the Local Preachers can make no just pretensions to learning, we recognise amongst them some of the finest specimens of intellect that this country or any other has produced. Until those who affect to despise these servants of Jesus Christ, on account of their homely talents and humble attainments in knowledge, make themselves fully acquainted with their history, some expressed opinions may be regarded as not only unfounded but erroneous ; and when, at the same time, the advantages under which they laboured are considered, the wonder is not, that they should sometimes have failed in effective delivery, but that the subject-matter of their sermons, with the manner of their address, should have been so generally acceptable to close thinkers and earnest Christian men.



The Wesleyan Hymn-book, rich in its poetry, varied in its measures, adapted to every degree of Christian experience, and in itself a splendid monument to the poetic genius of the Wesleys, contains at least the production of one Layman, the same being also a Local Preacher. Thomas Bakewell was born in 1721, and after his conversion became one of Wesley's earliest "helpers" in the Gospel. A poet of no mean order, he consecrated his talents to the service of Jehovah, and one of his hymns has been honoured as the means of giving expression to the holy exultation of believers in every quarter of the globe. It first appeared in, "A Collection of Hymns addressed to the Holy, Holy, Holy, Triune God, in the person of Jesus Christ, our mediator and advocate," a Hymn-book which was published in the year 1757. It was also inserted in Madan's collection in 1760, and in Toplady's "Psalms and Hymns" in 1776, with one verse added to the original. It appeared, too, in its altered form, in the Methodist Collection, as revised in the year 1797, but in the Connexional Hymn-book, issued in 1808, it was from an unexplained cause omitted. The Supplement, which was added in 1830, again brought Bakewell's beautiful lines before the notice of the Wesleyan Methodists, and it still retains a high place in their personal regard. The author died in the year 1819, and his remains were interred near to those of John Wesley, to the rear of City Road Chapel, London; his grave being distinguishable by a headstone which records his name and the place of his birth—Greenwich—together with his age of ninety-eight years at the time of his decease, and the following simple record of his virtue and labours:—"He adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour eighty years, and preached His glorious Gospel about seventy years." We quote the first verse of Thomas Bakewell's Song of Praise:—

" Hail, thou once despised Jesus !  
Hail, thou Galilean King !



Thou didst suffer to release us,  
 Thou didst free salvation bring ;  
 Hail, thou agonising Saviour,  
 Bearer of our sin and shame !  
 By Thy merits we find favour,  
 Life is given through Thy name."

Bakewell's name is also associated, though not as a composer, with another Connexional hymn. During a visit to his friend Bakewell's house at Westminster, Thomas Olivers attended the Jewish synagogue, where he heard Signor Leoni sing, with powerful effect, a celebrated air. Olivers, charmed by the rendering of this exquisite piece of music, resolved to introduce it to his people, and to effect his laudable purpose he then decided to write a hymn in the same measure. Inspired with the liveliest feeling and the most exalted sentiment, he returned to Bakewell's hospitable dwelling, where he penned the sublime hymn beginning :—

" The God of Abraham praise,  
 Who reigns enthroned above,  
 Ancient of Everlasting Days,  
 And God of Love :  
 Jehovah, GREAT I AM,  
 By earth and heaven confest ;  
 I bow and bless the sacred name  
 For ever blest."

Referring to this incomparable piece, James Montgomery writes—" There is not in our language a lyric of more majestic style, more elevated or more glorious imagery. Its structure, indeed, is unattractive on account of the short lines, but like a stately pile of architecture, severe and simple in design, it strikes less on the first view than after deliberative examination." The hymn 653 is, in part, the composition of a Local Preacher, the first three verses being the production of Robert Carr Brackenbury ; the remainder of the stanzas that of Charles Wesley. These instances of metrical



composition, written by Local Preachers, show their connection with the established psalmody of Methodism. Though few in number, the excellence of their writings is great. Let it not be surmised, however, that we establish their claim to poetic genius on so slender a foundation. On various subjects many of them have written copiously: several of these productions appearing in religious publications, others being presented to the world in volumes of different sizes. In this department of literature, the Local Preachers occupy no unimportant place.

In Polemics they have exhibited considerable mental penetration and ingenuity which, appropriately expressed and timely used, were of great service to the Connexion. After the death of Mr Wesley many questions of serious import were agitated, and the constitution of the body was not unfrequently attacked, but none were more ready and able to repel the assailants than the Lay-Preachers of those days. The controversies to which we refer were begun by Kilham in 1795, Warren in 1835, and Dunn Everett and Griffith in 1849. Into their respective merits we cannot enter. We must say, however, that none were of more service to the Connexion than Local Preachers in bringing out fairly and fully the various points in dispute. The Conference of 1850 was so gratified with their labours, as to associate with the names of its members those of Lay Brethren, who had signalised themselves in the public discussions of the previous year. Cordial votes of thanks were not only presented to eminent Ministers for their vindications of the Church from invidious aspersions, but also to distinguished Lay-Preachers for the works annexed to their names: George Smith, the author of "Wesleyan Ministers and their Slanderers," Charles Welch on "The Claims of Lay Delegation." In passing such a resolution the Conference acted with discrimination, impartiality, and justice.



The questions were of momentous interest, and the treatises of the laymen amply earned the commendation which their authors received. Other works of a similar nature, but varied in subject and on a larger scale, have been furnished by Local Preachers. One of these may be cited as illustrative of the rest, and it is a production of surpassing merit. In a volume of 400 8vo pages, displaying great research, erudition, and acumen, William Anthony Hails produced a thorough confutation of "Volney's Ruins of Empires." By other writings also, which were chiefly of a polemical character, he exhibited a critical acquaintance with the Hebrew, Greek, and other classical languages, as well as the mind of a powerful reasoner. These were entitled, "The Pre-Existence and Deity of the Messiah," "The Claim of Christianity to the Respect of Mankind, or Unitarian Principles Investigated," and "Socinianism Unscriptural." With but few advantages, he acquired an extensive knowledge of nearly every branch of science. He became a teacher of repute in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where he resided, and was regarded by the Bishop of Durham as the best Hebrew scholar in the North of England. In the pages of *The Critical Journal*, he successfully encountered some of the more notable Hebraists of his day. His life was altogether an exemplification of the power and advantage of self-culture. He says, in one of his pamphlets, "My small stock of learning (except a little English, arithmetic, and geometry), has been acquired by my own industry, without tutor or assistant; and, to add to my difficulties, my exertions have frequently been made under circumstances, the most unpropitious to my pursuits." Contemporary with Hails, and justly celebrated for his discursive treatises, was Thomas Brocas. Mighty in the Scriptures, and endued with argumentative reasoning powers of no mean order, this Local Preacher addressed



himself to the work of refuting the doctrines of Calvin, and setting forth, in contradistinction to these views, the universality of human redemption by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His efforts bore the impress of close thought, beautiful expression, and defined aim, and were made the means of good to many of God's believing children. They were called forth by reason of the fierce attacks that were then made upon the Methodist Churches, and by the unrestricted advocacy of Calvinism, by some who were bitterly opposed to Arminianism. The treatises in question are named respectively :—"Universal Goodness ;" "A Scourge for Scandal ;" "Calvinism Unmasked ;" "God no Respector of Persons ;" "The Beauties of Divine Truth ;" and "A Paraphrase on the latter part of the eighth and ninth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans." The following passages from his diary are so full of sound philosophy, and manifest so much of the natural cast of his mind, that we quote them here—"I have seldom," he says, "known a *resolute*, moral man, whose sons were profligate : and scarcely have I known a mild, gentle father without firmness, who brought up his own sons, but he brought them up to their ruin, and in several instances to his own." . . . "The following things, I perceive, are a cause of ruin to many. One lies in bed in the morning till eight or nine o'clock, by which means he loses the best part of the day, and gives all around him an opportunity of robbing him. A second, a young tradesman, gets a horse and consequently an extra servant, and is seen riding about like a gentleman when he ought to be at his day-books and ledger, until he has neither day-book nor ledger to turn over, and is obliged to walk all the future days of his life. Another, on entering into business, marries a wife of fortune and respectability ; gains £300 a year by his business, but by keeping an expensive table, and seeing much company, lives



at the rate of £500: of course his ruin is sure. A fourth rises early, takes little rest, and eats the bread of carefulness till he becomes rich, and gives security for some of the above-mentioned persons, by accommodating them with his name on their notes, until both go hand in hand to prison. A fifth is avaricious, hard-hearted, cruel, and will help no one. The curse of God is upon his ill-gotten wealth, which is put into a bag with holes. He who lived by outwitting others is himself outwitted in his turn, and all is lost. In the midst of all these dangers, and more that might be mentioned (such as falling into shameful sin, by which I have seen two or three opulent families suddenly ruined), what need have I to watch and pray, to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord! Oh how happy, how secure are men when they live like Christians!" This remarkable man has been honoured with the title of "Father of Methodism in Shrewsbury."

We cite but one more case in our present connection, though many more might be instanced, as evidencing the intellectual capacity of devoted Lay Christian labourers. Anthony Steele, of Barnard Castle, possessed the high esteem and loving regard of all who knew him, and his name deserves to be held in remembrance by posterity. By unwearied and laborious effort, he collated the facts which form the basis of a "History of Methodism in Barnard Castle and the Neighbourhood." He was also the author of an able work on "Christianity in Earnest." To him we owe the memoir of the Rev. Hodgson Casson, and previous to the illness which terminated his life, he was preparing for publication a work on the Wesleyan Hymn-book. Such was the respect in which he was held, that the news of his death evoked feelings of deep sorrow throughout the community, and the tradesmen of the town in general closed their shops on the day of his interment.



In the ranks of Local Preachers, hundreds have become famous for their theological knowledge and eloquent address, as well as for the great ability and faithfulness with which they served Methodism throughout the period of their sanctified lives. Hundreds also of our highly gifted laymen have been elected to the pastorates of other Dissenting Churches, but, with few exceptions, they retained their place in the communion which had been instrumental in giving to them their spiritual life and birthright, until these were consummated in eternal glory. We furnish the reader with one or two examples of the kind. Thomas Tucker, of Clifton, near Bristol, was a man of fine parts and Apostolic spirit, and because of his sterling qualities as a preacher, was beloved by those to whom he ministered the Word of Life. Admired by other Churches than his own, he was offered the regular charge of a congregation, involving much pecuniary advantage to himself. The year 1799 was one of great trial to him, inasmuch as the necessities of life were high-priced, work was scarce, and he could only with much difficulty maintain himself and his numerous family. At such a time a Dissenting Church proffered him an education at an academy, after which he was to assume the stated duties of an ordained minister of the Gospel, while in the meantime his family would be supported. To several such offers he gave an unwilling ear, and replied with disinterested regard for his spiritual mother—"I was called among the Methodists, and I will continue a Methodist; their people shall be my people, and their God my God." Equally disinterested were the efforts of Sampson Stainforth, and equally conclusive were his answers to those who made the like overtures to him. Happy in the work to which he had put his hand, and content with the sphere of labour in which he moved, he could not be drawn from the ranks of Methodism. Although



flattering prospects were held out to him as the result of his so doing, with true Christian philanthropy he observed, "Firstly, It was clear God had blessed me in this way; therefore I was afraid to go out of it. Secondly, I saw how much hurt had been done in the Society by these separations; and, thirdly, as to money or ease, my heart is not set on money, and I am not weary of my labour." This honoured man was *ordained* a minister in 1764 by the Greek Bishop, but although he had received such a marked distinction, he walked humbly with his brethren, and acted harmoniously with them for the common good. Few, generally speaking, have been so loyal to Methodism as the members of this class of Gospel labourers.

The position of Lay-Preachers in the Connexion, has not only entailed self-sacrifice upon them but also exposed them to much persecution. But in the struggles for liberty in the early times they displayed the truest heroism. As champions of the right they demanded, and after trial at law secured, for themselves and their successors liberty to preach the glorious Gospel of Christ, subject only to the approval or censure of their superiors and brethren in the Church. At Audlem, in the County Palatine of Chester, William Wood was preaching on the 14th June 1812, when an attorney rudely assaulted him, and, while the Local Preacher knelt for prayer, his persecutor seized and dragged him a considerable distance. After this cruel interference with the servant of God, the lawyer professed to have a warrant from Sir Corbet Corbet, a Justice of the Peace, for the apprehension of Wood, but such was not produced at the time of the assault. Two days afterwards, the preacher was served with a warrant, and on the evidence of the attorney and a constable he was fined twenty pounds. Being unable to pay the fine, his goods were sold and he was reduced to a state of comparative starvation. The



matter was not allowed, however, to rest here. Proceedings were taken at law, and in the following year Wood obtained a verdict, with two hundred pounds as damages, and when his enemies appealed against the judgment in the Court of Queen's Bench, Wood was again successful. Such were some of the difficulties with which the early Methodist Preachers, Itinerant and Local, had to contend ; and thus was the way prepared for obtaining liberty of conscience for all the inhabitants of our country, regardless of the distinction of sects. Though aware that they would be subjected to opprobrium, malice, and persecution, these good men of a past generation engaged earnestly in the work of preaching the Gospel. Had they not been constrained by a feeling that it was absolutely necessary for them to do so, and had they not been influenced by the purest of motives, they would not have encountered the difficulties and opposition which conspired to deter them from prosecuting their noble aims. And as we review the history of the Connexion, and note the achievements of men who proved themselves to be true heroes of the Cross, we cannot but consider them as being the fathers of religious liberty in England.

But such men were not only the brave defenders of the rights of conscience, they were also the able exponents of Christian faith and practice. In dark and troublous times, they were of essential importance to the Church of God. Unlettered they might be, but unread in the Scriptures they were not. It would not be a difficult task to enumerate numerous instances in which Lay Brethren have exhibited a more than ordinary knowledge of the Sacred Word, but one will suffice for our present purpose. John Blakemore, of Leamington, was a Local Preacher fifty-five years. In his day, "the walks were long, the roads were bad, and the appointments frequent," nevertheless he punctually



and successfully discharged the duties assigned to him. To many more encomiums on his blameless life was added the following, "*He knew his Bible almost by heart.*" In the "Methodist School of Biography" we have not only truthful descriptions of the inner life of the Christian, the study of which must ever be of incalculable advantage to the believer, but delineations also of the outward, visible, every-day life of God's faithful people, which are fitted to awake in the reader a spirit of holy emulative zeal, while they illustrate the will of the Lord concerning us. The life of Thomas Ryder, of Hull, was of this nature. Holiness to the Lord was written on his heart, and was reflected in his uniformly Christian deportment. He effectively discharged the duties of various stewardships, besides serving the Church as a Local Preacher for more than forty years. Without obtruding his charity, he was a constant visitor of the poor ; often entering the unfrequented habitation of distress. On one occasion two ladies called at the house of one of the recipients of his bounty, and after climbing a narrow step-ladder, they entered the chamber of poverty, observing, "You have not many friends coming to see you here." The woman replied, "Thomas Ryder comes every week to see me." He was associated in the early morning exercises of that eminently holy man, William Bramwell, and after many years of faithful service, was re-united to his friend and brother in the realms of everlasting day. These examples of intellectual capacity, Christian usefulness, and holy living, when received as representatives of thousands of their class, will convey, in some degree, to the mind of the reader, an idea of the high moral character and important position which the Local Preachers of Methodism have ever sustained in the Church of Christ, since the first institution of a Lay-Ministry.

There are other points connected with Lay Agency which,



on account of their interest and importance, ought not to be overlooked. Many names of celebrity in the history of other Churches, first appeared in public on the Methodist Local Preachers' Plan. Animated by the Spirit of God, and brought by Divine Providence into suitable spheres of Christian labour, these persons essayed first to exhort in general terms, and then to preach from a selected text. As their talents were developed they, with the changing circumstances of human existence, proceeded to other districts which appeared to them more desirable, as furnishing greater facilities for following their avocations in life. And when we seek to estimate their usefulness in other Churches than our own, and consider the high positions to which they have attained therein, we cannot condemn the course which they pursued. Nor on the other hand need they look with disdain at the rock from which they were hewn. Rather should they act in the spirit and employ the language of the renowned Dr Horne, author of the "Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures," who said, "For many years, I had the privilege and comfort of being in communion with the Wesleyan Methodists, among whom I found many kind friends, who counselled me in the difficulties and trials to which I was exposed, while they edified me by their Christian conversation. I quitted that Society, only when the ecclesiastical regulations of the Church of England rendered my retirement from them necessary, previously to my preparing for ordination in that section of the Church universal. But I had the privilege of keeping up a Christian correspondence with many of them ; and I have been favoured with the successive friendships of their most eminent ministers, to the present time." With similarly kind feelings, and in an equally affectionate manner, did the celebrated John M'Gowan, author of "The Dialogues of Devils," and the popular



satirical sermon called "The Shaver," look towards the Local Preachers with whom he was associated soon after his conversion, and speak of their great usefulness in the Church. Dr Leifchild, the Congregationalist, was none the worse, but very much the better, for having been a Methodist. In a certain provincial town there are now to be found the Vicar, the clerical master of an hospital, and the incumbent of a parish, all of whom were at one time or other Methodist Local Preachers. In every section of the Christian Church, indeed, there have been and are now employed those who have served in our Lay-Ministry.

Were we to enumerate all the interesting facts connected with Methodist Lay Agency with which we have become acquainted, their number might well be termed legion. Sufficient, we think, has been stated in this chapter to establish a claim on the part of Lay-Preachers to the loving regard of the Connexion in general. We have seen the value of their suggestions to the Master-builder of our spiritual Zion ; their relationship to, and co-operation with, the leading spirits of Wesleyanism ; the abundant success attending their personal efforts ; the high character which their talents and moral qualities won for them in the world ; and, in view of their lives and labours, no terms, however eulogistic, can overrate their value. We cannot read the story of their careers and fail to observe in them the marks of true godliness. Like Moses, when his face so shone with heavenly light that the people could not look upon him, the hallowed influence of the early Methodist Preachers was all-powerful among their fellows. They were endowed with the noble attribute of true devotion ; their sanctity gave force and effect to the words they uttered ; pre-eminently were they vessels of honour in the temple of our God. Though, like Elisha and Amos, they tended cattle and followed the plough, or Peter and Andrew, who cast their



nets as humble fishermen, these men sometimes followed lowly avocations ; yet, like the Prophets and Apostles of old, they carried with them Divine credentials, they delivered the Lord's messages of grace, mercy and peace to the people with authority, and throughout the land they were revered as the servants of the Triune God. Whatever may be said to the contrary, they were not ordinary men. Every candid reader must admit that they possessed not only Christian courage but, as a rule, talents of a high order. Whilst admitting that there were hundreds whose talents were of an ordinary character, we may justly assert that hundreds more were qualified by rare intellectual endowments for the discharge of the duties of the sacred office, and were fittingly regarded as leaders of the people. Turn to whatever sphere of science, art, general literature, or theology we may, traces of their individual merits are to be found. As a natural result, untold blessings accompanied their labours. Here, we find them planting living Churches ; there, establishing schools of learning ; now, directing godly aspirations ; then, supplying material for thoughtful research ; at one time, carefully attending to the cultivation of their own vineyard ; at another, serving divers sections of the Church ; while Methodism, in particular, and Christendom, at large, have reaped, and are now reaping, results that cannot be estimated by man.

We have but to contrast the origin and present condition of Methodism, to learn how valuable were the services rendered by her Local Preachers to humanity. As the harbingers of the truth they successfully prepared the way for their Itinerant Brethren. As the founders of Churches they gathered together Societies, built sanctuaries, and, after much earnest effort, cheerfully gave place to a stated ministry. As men inspired by Biblical knowledge and disciplined lives, they have formed, and continue to



form, the buttresses of Methodism. We are indeed reaping much of that harvest of blessing, the seeds of which they plentifully sowed. The work which they began may be continued by us. Wide-spread as Methodism may be, it has not as yet permeated the masses of the people ; but the tendencies of her constitution, doctrine, and practice are towards such a glorious result, and for the full accomplishment of Wesley's design, no other agency is needed than those already established, and which have hitherto proved eminently successful. What has been said of Wesley's instructions, "Do not mend our rules, but keep them," may in an accommodated sense be applied to the Lay-Ministerial office. More humble but God-fearing men are wanted to publish amongst their neighbours the news of salvation ; more Mission Stations should be planted in the densely populated districts of our country. We need to go down to the humblest conditions of human existence, as well as to rise to the standard of the more elevated classes in society. Let but the labourer be adapted to his work, and persevere in the same, and by the blessing of Jehovah we may confidently look forward to the results of Christian self-denial and energy, until we comprehend in one vast plan every phase of social distinction. Let such be the aim and end of our Connexional progress.

Christian labour is never expended on the poor without being rewarded by Him who became poor, "that we through His poverty might be made rich." The profligate and out-cast of society may yet be brought into the liberty of the Gospel of Christ, by this arm of our Church. Those who sit upon the dung-hill may now, as in times past, be made princes in our Israel. Let but Wesleyan Local Preachers, strong in Christian principle, and inspired by the Holy Spirit, work in unity with the Ministers of their Circuits, and the darkness of iniquity shall be dispersed by the light



of the Gospel, the ignorance of the froward shall give place to the wisdom of the just, and where moral waste and desolation once reigned, shall be planted the fruitful garden of the Lord. A lower aim than this is not worthy of the disciples of Christ ; to seek and to save the lost was the mission of the Saviour of men ; for the purpose of evangelising England, John Wesley preferred labour, privation and suffering, to ease, pleasure and academic honours. Inspired by a like holy enthusiasm, Wesley's humble followers have hitherto given the Gospel no uncertain sound, and what in these days we most need is God-called and God-qualified men. May that day never dawn upon Methodism, when she shall be actuated by any other motive than to spread the Gospel of the grace of God to the uttermost parts of the earth. May her Itinerant and Lay Pastors increase in holy emulation ; each and all striving to hasten that time when " They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord : for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

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